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ABSTRACT

A study of language and literacy activities and attitudes in a southern California bilingual community and the resulting development of more culturally relevant writing instruction for junior and senior high school students of that community is reported. The initial task was an ethnographic survey of the community, focusing on its language activities and values. Four families were studied and compared, and the parents' perspectives examined. Based on these findings, appropriate writing activities were developed for this group and formulated into instructional modules, for which seminars were held to familiarize teachers with the materials and techniques. Modules were designed with content and activities relevant to students' everyday concerns and communication needs. The writing modules were then used in 3 junior high schools with 293 students. Evaluations of over 1,000 pre- and post-course writing samples showed a significant achievement gain during the period of the study. It is suggested that the potential role of ethnography in instructional reform is great, providing a key to instructional, motivational, and sociocultural congruence in the classroom for both teachers and students. (MSE)

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ED240862

FINAL REPORT

IMPROVING THE FUNCTIONAL WRITING OF BILINGUAL SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

In Partial Fulfillment of
Contract No. 400-81-0023

Submitted to:

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I. ORGANIZATION OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Research Plans and Execution

After very conscientious review by NIE officers and a careful return to our data we have substantially revised the first draft of the report and provided more complete information in those areas requested by the reviewers. We have also clarified the relationship between our ethnographic work and the reorganization of the writing curriculum represented by the modules used in our writing implementation plan. Also a substantial revision, selection and addition of relevant body of literature has resulted in a more cohesive theoretical frame to which our research attempts to relate. We are well aware that there may be profound philosophical differences among scholars who use qualitative methods, especially in the area of literacy and text manipulation. Our particular approach and theoretical assumptions presented in the original proposal which was awarded the contract, have definite bearing on the method for data collection, analysis and for our statements on practice and policy resulting from our study. We hope that our particular perspective, which has been helpful and valid in a variety of research contexts related to literacy, becomes also helpful here to those who want to better understand the processes involved in the acquisition, of writing skills for ethnolinguistic minority students.

The research tasks mandated in the contract were four:

Task 1: To conduct an ethnographic study of language and literacy activities in the community and/or possible future work settings of junior high and/or senior high

Task 2: To develop instructional writing activities derived from information gathered in the ethnographic study.

Task 3: To submit for approval by the Project Officer the proposed

procedures for implementing and evaluating the instructional activities and to carry out the approved procedures.

Task 4: To describe the instructional activities and to discuss in detail how the ethnographic information derived from the study was used in the development of those activities.

Part II of this manuscript: The Ethnography of Writing in Non-School Settings: Forms, Functions and Values of Literacy, is intended to fulfill our contractual responsibilities in response to Task 1. This part includes additional ethnographic material presented as part of the development of writing activities for the classroom. In response to Task 2, we have written Part III. Our response to Task 3, which was delivered and approved by Dr. Miyamura, the NIE project officer, is attached at the end in Appendix A "Revised Procedures for Implementing and Evaluating Instructional Activities." Finally, in response to our contractual obligations for Task 4, we have written specific comments integrated in the analysis of the Implementation of Writing Instruction, Part II and III, and we have summarized the highlights of our response in Part IV.

Our research team consisted of two co-principal investigators, Dr. H. T. Trueba (SDSU) and Dr. Luis Moll (UCSD), a field coordinator, Dr. Stephen Diaz, and a school coordinator, Ms. Rosa Diaz. Additionally, we had various research assistants, and, although not funded by the NIE, twelve teachers doing the research with us as part of their graduate training. These teachers worked in three junior high schools: four at Southwestern, two at Montgomery, and six at Castle Park. Each of these teachers was involved in courses and rigorous training sessions that familiarized them with ethnographic research. Each of the twelve teachers (all female) were to develop, implement and document the implementation process of six modules. The result was that, with 293

students (almost 25 students per teacher), with six modules each, we have over 1000 written pieces to analyze (not all students wrote all six modules).

More specifically, our design required long and persuasive meetings with principals, parents, teachers, and youngsters. There were two parallel efforts that were carried on throughout the research period; one, the ethnographic study of the community, and the other, the study and implementation of writing instruction. We will briefly discuss our strategies to pursue both efforts.

The community ethnographic study was carried on from the very first day of our contract, and continued to guide the school efforts and the analysis of data gathered in school. Drs. Trueba and Diaz, with the assistance of graduate students, gathered information on the organization of the community, its social composition, its demographic trends, and, more significantly, on the family life of junior high students. A special interest led the researchers to the role of parents in the process of literacy acquisition. It was, indeed, through the research conducted in the homes that we gained an understanding of the forms and functions of written communication among Hispanics, their schooling, and their adaptation to the new social order represented by school. Part II that follows summarizes the results of our ethnographic study. The focus of the study was in the forms, functions and values of literacy.

The study of writing instruction and our efforts to retrain teachers and, with their help, develop more effective writing instructional activities, represents the more substantial and engaging part of our contract. We can distinguish the following steps:

1. Visit to schools, school principals, teachers and other personnel.

2. Structure of orientation sessions to potential teacher participants in our research project.

3. Final selection of the twelve teachers.

4. Organization of training sessions and exposure to writing instruments, instructional techniques and evaluation devices.

5. Intensive exposure to the social reality of the student via ethnographic information presented by ethnographers and parents.

6. Institutional support given by SDSU in the form of credit to twelve teachers and a small stipend to defray tuition expenses.

7. Actual implementation of six modules, intercalating additional exposure to ethnographic information in between modules, ethnographic research techniques and an opportunity to document ethnographically the process of writing as it occurred in the classroom.

8. Regular training and inservice sessions offered to twelve teachers in our field office.

9. Dr. Diaz's efforts to assist teachers in the organization of new classroom activities, this making available to teachers his ethnographic knowledge.

10. Completion of the implementation of all six modules.

11. Analysis of outcomes, including teachers' ethnographic accounts, journals and students' written production.

12. Holistic analysis of modules 1 and 6, as well as holistic analysis of the pre- and post-tests conducted in the schools regularly.

In the analysis of outcomes (which will require a great deal more time for completion) we have: (1) identified a substantial difference in the performance of those students who completed the six experimental modules from the pre- to the post-test. The analysis focuses on the process which triggered the improvement of writing instruction. In fact, task four of this contract;

the explanation of how ethnographic research was helpful in the development and implementation of better writing curriculum, will be fulfilled by discussing in detail the nature of the new instructional process.

Part III (Training Teachers and the Implementation of Writing Instruction), discusses the twelve steps listed above and provides specific examples of the effectiveness of the writing modules inspired by ethnographic methods and information. This part speaks for itself and constitutes the core of the present report. The last part, Part IV (The Relationship of Ethnography to the Implementation of Writing Curriculum), is an attempt to articulate the highlights of our findings and their implications for educational practice and policy.

Our conceptual approach has indeed profound implications for an understanding of the nature of literacy and the acquisition of writing skills for ethnolinguistic minority students. Going beyond the surface skills of coding and decoding, effective writing entails the manipulation of complicated, independent and complex symbolic systems (linguistic, social political, intra-institutional, etc.) demanded in many academic activities.

Some of our findings may have serious implications for the training of teachers. We can document the arduous process of making teachers (through their personal involvement in getting ethnographic information on students) aware of the social reality of the ethnic children, and of these children's undiscovered talents. Ethnographic inquiry did not stop at the simple level of contributing new data to build a new curriculum; it helped to shape teachers' judgements on students and to construct new learning environments more suitable to the minority learner.

Another possible consequence of our study, concerning the current problems of unemployment and illiteracy, is the realization that in order to qualify for certain jobs, it is necessary to manipulate the very social systems represented by the school, and to deal with these systems (employment agencies, banks, hospitals, grocery stores, etc., etc.) through text (just the same as in school). The minority learner often does not get the needed exposure to "foreign" institutions and the "unknown" modus operandi of these institutions except through school. The very economic survival, i.e., the obtaining of employment and the successful communication with people from public institutions, banks, stores, employment agencies, etc., depends on the successful acquisition of the writing skills provided by schools. This may not be the case for mainstream Anglo Americans; but it seems that for the ethnic families, schools continue to have a dramatic impact on their economic, social and political life. The implications of school input vis-a-vis the urgent problems of economic development across countries should invite a revision of literacy programs for adults in the United States and abroad.

Other implications of the present study deal with possible misconceptions of curricular reform. The onus of achieving academically has been placed on the learner. Our theoretical approach using Vygotsky's zone of proximal development via ethnographic inquiry leads us to believe that in order for the learner to become more actively involved and motivated to participate in learning activities, he/she must be able to determine the what and the how of learning with the help of an expert (an adult) or a more knowledgeable peer. It is not enough to impose new curricula on students; it is imperative that teachers and students discover more effective organizational structure of the

learning activities. Our module implementation is a clear example of this strategy. Not only the actual learning occurs more efficiently, but the resulting learning environment tends to have sustained effects for students; i.e., they learn to learn. We will discuss these issues in our conclusion.

In this introductory part, however, we must outline the basic theoretical assumptions that guided our effort. A more detailed discussion of these conceptual foundations is presented in the attached volume (partially funded under our contract) entitled "Advances in Literacy: The Ethnography of Written Communication." This volume also has important contributions from other members of our research team and from other colleagues in the field of literacy (please see the introduction to the volume).

Review of Relevant Literature

It is obvious that ethnographic approaches, in their various forms, characterized by different theoretical and methodological biases, have become a powerful instrument in educational research, particularly when this research is focused on multicultural settings and ethnolinguistic minority students. Their well-established tradition has seen sociolinguistic pioneer studies on the processes of communication (Ervin-Tripp, 1964; Gumperz & Hymes, 1964; Hymes, 1964, 1967) on the descriptions of messages as manifestations of codes of behavior (Frake, 1962, 1964), and in the structure of social interaction (Garfinkel, 1967; Mehan, 1978).

Ethnographic methods as applied to the study of school populations and instructional activities have yielded important contributions that help us understand the nature and the organization of behavior in learning settings.

Erickson, for example (1976, 1979), showed us how to adapt traditional ethnographic methods to the study of schools and classrooms. Spindler (1974), Wolcott (1967, 1973), Spradley (1979), and Ogbu (1980-81) among others, emphasize the holistic unifying nature of a "genuine" ethnography. Scribner and Cole (1973, 1981) and Cole and Scribner (1974) have advanced productive ethnographic approaches in the study of literacy using a sociohistorical psychological perspective. While the debate about what constitutes a "genuine" ethnography, and the legitimate theoretical and methodological diversity continues, ethnographers across disciplines engage themselves in activities remarkably similar in search for a better understanding of social behavior in context, making inferences and interpretations of cumulative communicative (linguistic, paralinguistic, kinesic) cues. Context is identified by monitoring the development of communicative activities seen by ethnographers as observable, "externally definable", sequentially-linked chains of meaning shared and exchanged by interacting participants (Trueba, 1981). Cognitive psychology, linguistics and political science have adapted their theoretical constructs and engaged in ethnographic educational research with different goals and assumptions (see J. Green's recent review of current research projects funded by NIE, 1982). And yet these disciplines have used similar ethnographic techniques for getting at the processes of teaching and learning: video- and audio-tape analysis, observations, recordings and inferencing techniques.

What ethnographic research begins to explore successfully in educational settings in the complex structure of the instructional process: the complementing roles and responsibilities of teacher and students, the attribution of meaning to messages, the participation levels, the group boundaries, the cultural congruence of patterns of communication, the zones of proximal

development and the conditions necessary to maximize the transfer of knowledge and of cognitive skills.

Writing research, particularly if focused on the skills required to articulate ideas in text, is uniquely complicated. The last decade has placed the political spotlight on "functional illiteracy" as a disease to be eradicated, with little concern for its meaning, and the need to define the socio-economic and cultural contexts of literacy in a pluralistic society. Indeed, ethnic, linguistic and class differences share unevenly in the benefits of knowing how to deal with written text; but we do not know the distribution of these benefits, nor do we know much on the nature of the reading and writing processes as they interplay with sociocultural and motivational factors. Is illiteracy the cause of poverty, or poverty the cause of illiteracy? Szwed (1981, pp. 14-15) has alluded to the basic problem of fully understanding literacy before answering questions about the social meaning of literacy, levels for performance, and its distribution among populations. It is likely that literacy is a different phenomenon in diverse sociocultural contexts for different populations. We must describe literacy as it is found in its contextual frame. Cazden (1974), Mehan (1978, 1981) and others argue that classroom behaviors cannot be understood by simply codifying and quantifying them.

"The Ethnography of Communication", edited by Gumperz and Hymes in 1964 (special issue of the American Anthropologist), created a new descriptive science in which language analysis was used to study communicative codes. For ethnographers, the search for an "emic" or an insider's view of cultural reality was pursued with the general understanding that the language studies were "holistic", ethnographically based, and focused on communicative processes.

The truly dynamic aspects of communicative behavior led to issues of the role of participants, and differences in behavior due to their personalities, culture, and other non-linguistic factors. The form and function of language was seen as flexible and changeable by unique contextual elements. Additional significance was given to the cross-cultural validity of non-verbal patterns of communication (paralinguistic and kinesic primarily). The norm for judging appropriate linguistic behavior was the "speech community", not a "standard form of the language." As a result of this frame of reference several issues were examined: What communicative events exist in a community? What are their components? What relationships exist between them? How do they work, generally and in exceptional cases? Sociolinguistic competence, defined as the capacity to generate and interpret appropriately linguistic messages in given social contexts, was a notion adapted to language assessment or performance of single persons. The focus was on the abilities that must be mastered beyond those of producing and interpreting correct grammatical structures in order to be a recognized functional member of the community, one that knows nuances of a language, i.e., not only what may be said, but also what should and shouldn't be said, and when and where.

Dell Hymes (1964, 1967, 1976 and 1981b) has consistently advocated the application of ethnography of communication to instructional settings in order to better understand students' performance. Central to the ethnography of communication is the notion of communicative competence (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1981; Philips, 1983). Not only must one know how to generate communicative behaviors, but also how to generate culturally and situationally appropriate behaviors in order to participate in social interactions.

Communicative competence in writing is based on both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Utilizing an ethnographic research design for writing instructional settings can be instrumental in gaining an indepth understanding of the writing process. One of the more important areas of current research is the one found in cultural congruence between teacher and students in the instructional setting. Several studies have focused on the teacher/student ethnic match/mismatch variable (Mohatt & Erickson, 1981); Carrasco, 1981) with new insights that evolved as a direct result of observational techniques used to examine the dynamics of communicative interaction.

Based on the pioneer efforts of Gumperz and Hymes (1964), some scholars have applied ethnographic methods to educational problems, especially to problems related to the generation and interpretation of text. This approach led to the examination of various facets of the communication through text as a holistic unit of activities. Trueba & Wright (1980-81, 1981), Green (1982), and others have summarized some ethnographic research in schools. (See also Trueba, Guthrie & Au, 1981). But there is no significant body of literature on the ethnographic study of writing. Pioneer efforts in this direction are enthusiastically welcome.

An ethnographic approach emphasizing the role of practitioners of potential productivity in writing research is "ethnographic monitoring" (Carrasco, 1981; Erickson, 1976; Hymes, 1981a, 1981b). Relevant classroom phenomena and the needs and concerns of the classroom participants are identified on the basis of prior research and in consultation with school staff. The salient feature of this research approach is a genuine collaborative relationship between the researchers and the practioners (Carrasco, 1981; Florio & Walsh,

1981; Hymes, 1974). Ethnographic monitoring is especially useful in obtaining: (1) the analysis of reading and writing skills as a means of discovering new phenomena of functional relevance--new relationships among variables and systematic properties (Carrasco, 1981; Erickson, 1978; Hymes, 1981a; Trueba & Wright, 1981; Trueba et al., 1981); and (2) a structural analysis of reading and writing events as components of a single process (Mehan's "constitutive ethnography," 1978).

Some scholars (constitive ethnographers) stress the importance of gathering retrievable ethnographic data, employing audio or videotape, or film for examining interactions extensively and repeatedly, often frame by frame (McDermott, 1976; Mehan, 1978). For instance, the audiotaping or videotaping of the classroom teachers as they interact with their trainers, their peers, and their students, can provide ample opportunity for analysis of their routine patterns of behavior through several models of analysis.

Constitutive studies operate on the interactional premise that social facts are created by the social structures (Cicourel, K. Jennings, S. Jennings, Leiter, Mackay, Mehan & Roth, 1974; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Scheflen, 1972). This implies an analysis of the entire course of interaction among participants in social events. The unit of analysis for constitutive studies is an event which, in turn, is composed of activities. Events are constellations of verbal and nonverbal behaviors made manifest in practical circumstances. Since the organization of events is socially constructed, researchers attempt to locate this structuring in the words of gestures of the participants as a "cohort's situated accomplishment" (Mehan, 1978; Mehan & Wood, 1975; Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). Constitutive ethnographers then seek to

insure that the structure they see in events and activities is the same as the structure that orients the participants (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970; Mehan, 1978). Following the work of Philips (1972 & 1983), as well as that of Au and Jordan (1981), and Mohatt and Erickson (1981), the variation in instructional arrangements of interaction is referred to as "participant structures." That is, through the process of socially mediated regulation, event and activity participants create contexts for communication. Constitutive ethnography can be applied to the study of writing as we analyze the structure of writing events and the various activities that integrate the process of writing. But before we pursue this application of a particular theoretical and methodological ethnographic approach, it is important to advance some notions and understandings about literacy and specifically the acquisition of writing skills which are commonly accepted in current thinking.

Our review of the literature will focus primarily on the sources (especially the most recent) dealing with literacy and writing. Some discussions of ethnographic research, particularly as it applies to the study of ethnolinguistic minorities in schools (their achievement and overall performance) is also relevant here, because we believe that one of the obstacles to the acquisition of literacy skills in linguistically different children is related with the reward system associated with schooling in general, and with the relatively diminished opportunity that such children have to acquire and exercise the very skills needed for academic success (writing skills involving cognitive, linguistic, and sociocultural knowledge and experience.

Many scholars, particularly coming from the anthropological cross-cultural corner of the social sciences, have challenged a single, universally-valid concept of literacy (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1981; Heath, 1980; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Szwed, 1981; and many others). The strong support for a pluralistic notion of literacy has important implications for modern conceptions of the relationships between forms/functions of literacy and societal organization. The possible coexistence of diverse types of literacies in different languages for a single society is indeed possible, and, in fact, it has been documented in the case of the Vai of West Africa (Sribner & Cole, 1978, 1981).

If the forms and functions of specific types of literacy are determined by the contextual sociocultural, political and economic characteristics of a society and by the agreed-upon use of a language or languages for specific communicative purposes, the greatest potential of literacy research must be found in the use of methodologies that have a recognized instrument value for getting at the contextual characteristics. This position suitable for getting at the contextual characteristics, is taken by Ogbu (1980), Scollon and Scollon (1979, 1981), Szwed (1981), Woods-Elliott and Hymes (1980), and many others reviewed by Woods-Elliott and Hymes(1980).

The discussions about literacy in general do not quite do justice to the specific processes involved in writing, i.e., in generating text, which are essentially different from those processes involved in reading text. If research on the writing side of the literacy coin has been neglected, the pragmatic implications of this neglect are still more serious; teachers need help in increasing the effectiveness of writing instruction. To increase this

effectiveness, Fredericksen and Dominic have recently called our attention to the nature of the writing process as a p[illegible]ive, contextualized and meaningful action with expected consequences (Fredericksen & Dominic, 1981, pp. 1-20). The antecedents of the actual generation of text, the expression of ideas through written text, and the reviews or editing of text, each have sets of complex interactive processes which are in turn affected by what the persons know about the topic, the language used, the audience for whom the piece is written, and the expected outcomes of the time/energy investment in writing. At the heart of the problems in understanding the writing process is the complex issue of communication across social, cultural and educational boundaries. The meaning of the written text will be constructed by the reader within the social, cultural and educational constraints which are part of the context.

Like many other groups undergoing rapid social change, migrants find themselves in the process of having to change their value system, their social organization and their communication patterns in order to survive economically. Consequently, literacy demands in the second language become stronger and impact deeply the family's life style, its relationship with the school, and the distribution of roles and responsibilities among family members. Many scholars have recognized such an impact (Goody, 1968a, 1968b; Goody & Watt, 1968; Inkeles & Smith, 1974; Scribner & Cole, 1981). Woods-Elliott and Hymes eloquently summarized this point.

> No longer can approaches to teaching the skills of literacy rest on a narrow notion of how people, societies, and communities value literacy and a narrow view of the role it plays in their world... New studies which do more than survey reading age scores, standards of writing, ability and levels of schooling reached as measures of literacy and the criteria upon which literacy policy is to be made. (1980, pp. 12-20)

This is precisely what the ethnography of communication is intended to accomplish and what general ethnographers have also aimed at, some with more success than others, Ogbu (1980) points at the school as the key institution both perpetuating the myth that literacy will produce upper mobility for Blacks and ethnic students by effectively preventing Blacks and ethnics from obtaining access to upwardly mobile positions available to the mainstream student. Blacks have become aware of these facts and, as a consequence, place less faith in the miracles of literacy. Is illiteracy the cause or the effect of differential access to socioeconomic resources? Is illiteracy the cause or the effect of cultural/linguistic mismatches in our school with large ethnic student populations? Heath has insisted on the need to obtain an ethnohistorical perspective of literacy prior to making any quick inferences about its cause or effect, or even before attempting to understand the specific nature and process of literacy acquisition in a given society (Heath, 1981). Her documentation of the development of literacy in the U.S., offers interesting insights regarding the cultural imperatives to write placed on tradesmen, farmers, ministers, politicians, and legislators (1981, pp. 27-31). The first state literacy test required in the U.S. was passed in the state of Connecticut in 1855, and required only reading; the second, in 1857, passed in the state of Massachusetts, required both reading and writing (Heath, 1981, p. 36). She concludes with a disheartening note:

> At the present time, in spite of heated discussions about the success of schools in teaching writing, there is almost no systematic description of the functions of writing in the society as a whole... Ethnographic research from communities and institutions is needed in order to provide information...(Heath, 1981, p. 44)

Even those authors ex professo concerned with the improvement of writing in our schools (Hendrix, 1981), or with language varieties and the use of appropriate language forms in writing (Reed, 1981; Whiteman, 1981; Valadez, 1981) wrestle with this fundamental issue of why writing is important, what kind of writing should be taught, and how students can be motivated to improve their writing skills. Reed alludes to the instructors' difficulty in "becoming linguistically sophisticated enough to handle what can be called problems of 'cross dialectal interference'"... (Reed, 1981, p. 143). With less concern for writing in a standard form, Valadez states: "There are ways of setting students to write. Motivation may be fostered by providing for the students an environment in which they can feel that the language they use, be it the low-prestige local dialect, or the standard dialect, will be honored." (Valadez, 1981, p. 177)

Writing skills, is recognized to have a top priority among the concerns of policy makers, especially if we consider the issues of social and educational equity involved:

> The students for whom educational achievement in general and writing achievement in particular has been most elusive in this country are primarily poor, speakers of non-mainstream dialects, and members of minority groups--that is, those who are least powerful and participate least in our society. (Whiteman & Hall, 1981, p. 1)

If we, therefore, look at literacy, reading and writing, as a complex process constituted by various cognitive, linguistic, social and communicative skills (including knowledge, competencies and communicative management abilities), then there is an enormously broad spectrum of factors and concerns that would seem to affect the acquisition of literacy. At one end of the spectrum, we find the most detailed interactional processes directly and immediately

determining the teaching/learning transactions of reading and writing (e.g., how the teacher manages the classroom and controls specific participant structures). At the other end of the spectrum, we would have all the societal organizational/structural factors facilitating or preventing access to the meaningful engagement in literacy activities; herein, we would find the social constraints or social incentives built into an educational system (which is, in turn, supported by the larger socioeconomic and political institutions) in order to form appropriate reward mechanisms. The nature and organization of the curriculum, its implicit value judgements and assumptions, the explicit recognition and prestige given to dominant mainstream cultural groups in this curriculum, and the assessment of achievement, are part of a cohesive organizational structure of schools that encompasses pervasively all educational decisions, and resource allocation from the highest management levels to the most casual behavioral patterns of a teacher in the classroom.

It is important to look at writing as a process which is different from reading or communicating orally. Writing has three major characteristics which other forms of communication do not share, or at least at the same level and with similar significance: (1) Writing requires the generation of a text in which there are logical relationships within and between sentences; (2) Writing demands that the author uses his/her own autonomous way of expressing ideas in text, and (3) Writing forces the author to anticipate the expected meanings and to make inferences regarding interpretation of text, given the audience's lexical and syntactic knowledge of the language. Recent authors are clearly conscious of these processes which characterize writing and of the need to study writing on its own merits (Fredericksen & Dominic, 1981:15; Olson & Torrence, 1981:234-255; Scardamelia, 1981:85-87).

The study of writing is intricately intertwined with that of schooling for many ethnic and migrant groups. Writing is often done for school purposes, and it is learned in the school setting. Ethnographic study of schooling provides the broader contextual frame of literacy. Ogbu advocates strongly the use of ethnography to balance micro-analysis of behavior with relevant educational and sociopolitical information surrounding schools and community (Ogbu, 1980-81, pp. 3-29).

Theoretical Assumptions

Our view is based on the principles of the sociohistorical school of psychology represented by Vygostky, Leont'ev, Luria, etc., and by contemporary followers, such as Cole, and other members of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition. Furthermore, we conducted an ethnographic study following the well established tradition of the ethnographers of communication (Hymes, Gumperz, and their followers). These two pivotal theoretical positions can be translated into several important assumptions that determined our research strategies. Here are some of the most important assumptions:

1. Learning/cognitive activities cannot be separated from social activities. In fact, social activities(interpsychological) allow a person to internalize and develop a social/cognitive skill (intrapsychologically). In turn, this internalization prepares a person for a higher level of interpsychological interaction.
2. Genetic transitions (from inter- to intra-psychological, or from social/interactive to cognitive/representational, is not

unidirectional. The internalization of a skill involves such transitions and permits higher level social/cognitive interpsychological operations.

3. In order to build an appropriate learning environment the learner must become an active agent and play a key role in determining his/her zone of proximal development. This is particularly true in social communication through text.
4. Interpsychological communicative behavior proceeds by means of chains of understandings and inferences which allow interactors to attribute meaning to communicative actions. Often a cumulation of cues (linguistic, paralinguistic, kinesic) as well as proxemic shifts guide people's interpretation of communicative behavior. This "non unique analyzability" of interactional messages requires use of the social systems, cultural values and implied meanings peculiar to a speech community.
5. Socially acquired skills through interpsychological interaction is crucial for the grasping of the cultural values, social systems and implied meanings that frame inferencing processes in communication through text.
6. When there is an incongruency in implied or inferred meanings in the implied cultural values of a message, a simple lack of understanding of a written text, it is possible (and likely) that the social realities of the participants (the writer and the reader) in the communicative event are far apart from each other.
7. Communication through text exhibits forms and functions specif-

ically relevant to, and meaningful for, the participants in the communicative activities. Therefore, in order to understand better communcative forms and functions (oral and written) of Hispanics, one must know the social organization of the Hispanic community. Particularly to how they are organized in relation to the dominant, majority community.

8. Training teachers to teach writing skills to Hispanic children must go beyond the instruction of writing techniques and move into the exploration of more effective ways of communicating with Hispanic children, and better ways of making them active builders of conducive learning environments.
9. To build more socially, culturally and cognitively effective learning environments, teachers must explore (e.g., via ethnographic inquiry) new participant structures in the classroom that will permit Hispanic students a greater involvement in and control of learning. Smaller, cooperative peer working units, and a slight shift of the teacher's position as controller of learning activities into one of catalyst of such activities, could be explored.
10. The role of reasearchers and teacher trainers should be consistent with the previous assumptions. Teachers should become the active agents of their own change, and be allowed to discover, under the guidance of the trainer, more effective instructional designs.

With these and other similar assumptions in mind, our research team engaged in the time consuming and difficult task of getting to know the community and the schools. Fortunately for the team, two of the researchers, Dr. and Ms. Diaz, live in the South Bay area and know a great deal about the setting. Their valuable contributions and multiple contacts permitted us to gather the needed data, move into the schools, conduct the analysis, and draft the preliminary conclusions.

Training in Ethnographic Methods

In order to set about the task of collecting ethnographic data in the community and homes it was decided to develop a training program for prospective research assistants. As part of this training course in ethnographic methodology was offered through the Multicultural Education Department at San Diego State University in the Fall 1981 and Spring 1982 semesters. Both courses required a minimum of 40 total hours of observations in the community and home. During the Spring (1982) semester the course was held at the Community Site as part of on effort to recruit graduate students who lived in or near the community and who were bilingual and bicultural. The majority of the students who participated in the class and subsequently conducted the fieldwork, were resident (and most were teachers) in the community and had attended the same schools.

The main purpose of the course was to provide each graduate research assistant with intensive training in the ethnographic data collection methods applicable to our study. A course description and some sample training materials are presented in Appendix B. The major topics presented in the course were:

1. Introduction to Ethnographic Research in Literacy.
2. Ethnographic Research - Methods and Purpose
3. Field Research;
   A. Participant Observation
   B. Ethnographic Method Interviewing

A factor critical to the success of the entire project, and one which greatly facilitated data collection was the field site office located in the community. All classes, community meetings, and some staff meetings were held there. The field site office also housed all records, student files, "raw" and "cooked" field notes and all the other paraphernalia necessary for conducting an extensive ethnographic study. Both researchers and participants quickly came to see it as the hub of all activities and did not hesitate to call or stop by for materials, information, classes or community meetings.

Entry into the various community sites and homes where observations were to take place were made by Stephen Diaz and Rosa Diaz members of the research team and long-term community residents. The bilingual-bicultural background of the research assistants also facilitated the process.

As part of the training several procedures were established to ensure that observations were being carried out according to project requirements and to systematically review and account for data collected by research assistants. This latter procedure required the research assistants to complete a three step sequence in the collection of data. First, research assistants were trained to review and update their field notes immediately after their observations. Second, they then expanded their raw field notes into a

"cooked" set that was typewritten with expanded comments provided by the research assistants to provide context for what they considered to be important events which occurred during the observation. The third step was a debriefing session between Dr. Diaz and each research assistant had each week to review the raw field notes and the "cooked" transcriptions of those notes. The fourth and final steps was a major summary paper written by each field worker. The purpose of this paper was to pull together into a cohesive whole all of the notes and observations carried out during the semester Research assistants were encouraged to generate hypotheses and conclusions covering their observations.

The purpose of the procedures described above was to ensure the reliability of data collected, a review procedure was established during the training of research assistants. This procedure involved the accompaniment of the research assistant by Dr. Diaz (co-teacher of the course with Dr. Trueba) into the observational setting. Both the research assistants and Dr. Diaz then proceeded to carry out the observation after which both reviewed the notes and discussed them. This procedure was carried out with each research assistant at the beginning of training and intermittantly in the course of the data gathering. Research assistants were also encouraged to request this review procedure if they felt unsure about any aspect of their observations. This process notably improved the quality and reliability of data collected in the field.

In order to summarize, catalog and subsequently analyze the data collected during the observations, a system was organized that facilitated the movement of raw data into an analyzable form. In the collection of data two

general categories were distinguished as preliminary organizational features for future analysis. One category was called literacy events. Within this category were to be included all events involving literacy (see below) with a view toward generating a matrix of the different form and function of literacy in the community and homes. A second category concerned the general background characteristic of target subjects and their families.

With respect to the first category research assistants were trained to observe and record any and all activities, materials, and oral communications during "literacy events." A literacy event was considered to be any interaction (e.g., reading) with print or any creation of print by the target subjects and other individuals. Training for the collection of literacy events was conducted in several ways: 1) initial training was done by having research assistants collect data on line while viewing video tapes of classroom interactions. They were to focus on a target child and keep track of literacy events and the surrounding vicinities. This training also gave research assistants a feel for the pace of natural events and allowed them to learn self-pacing and develop and practice efficient note-taking strategies. 2) Research assistants also conducted participant observations in familiar settings, e.g., with their own children or classrooms, etc. 3) Joint observations were conducted with research assistants and principal investigators in family and community settings where literacy events were the focus of the activity. 4) Several practice sessions were conducted in field settings such as local businesses, community centers, etc. 5) Research assistants also practiced conducting the formal interviews which were given to target families and community members at the start of the observation period. Copies of the interview and observation forms used in the study are in Appendix C.

Research assistants were also trained to collect demographic information on the target family and the community. First, community information was collected through documents available from government and public service agencies (e.g., Chamber of Commerce). Second, researchers were also assigned to conduct participant observations in various settings within the community. These settings included grocery stores, service agencies (e.g., welfare and employment office) and community centers.

Some demographic information on the target subjects and families was obtained by means of a structured formal interview conducted by the research assistants during the initial visit. Most information, however, was obtained in the course of the research assistant's observations and conversation with family members.

II. FORMS, FUNCTIONS AND VALUES OF LITERACY IN NON-SCHOOL SETTINGS

An ethnographic study of the forms, functions and values of literacy in the homes of twenty-seven junior high and high school students was conducted in order to better understand how the home and school literacy environments interface, what kind of support there is in the home for literacy activities demanded by the school, and what possible changes in the writing curriculum should be planned in order to make writing instruction more effective. These twenty-seven students belong to eight families observed for several months by trained graduate students in ethnographic methods. In order to better contextualize the information given on literacy outside of school settings, it is important to describe first the community, its surrounding schools (which are the target of the second part of this study), the implementation of the writing curriculum and the overall sociocultural, demographic and cultural characteristics of the population in the area under study.

The Community and Schools

The study was conducted in what is generally referred to as the South bay area of San Diego, California. For the purpose of this discussion we will be concerned with an approximately sixty-square mile area adjacent to the border between Mexico and the United States. The South Bay is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and extends about eight miles to the east ending near large tracts of undeveloped land which is called Otay Ranch. Its southernmost boundary is the Mexican border and the northern boundary is a line paralleling the border about eight miles to the north.

The "community" is actually a composite of several smaller communities within which the participant schools are located. These communities share several important commonalities, however, which allows us to consider them to compositely represent a community. The major common feature shared among the various school communities is the large proportion of ethnolinguistic minority people who live in the "community." A second feature is the poor educational performance which characterizes the students from these communities. In this section we will describe some general features of the larger "community" followed by more specific description of the school communities which surround the target schools.

Most of the South Bay is situated on a large mesa that extends five miles from the border and parallel it. The Otay River cuts through the mesa creating a lower two-mile wide river plain that serves as a natural separation between the mesa to the south and its continuation to the north. These geographic characteristics also serve as a division between the various communities that make up the South Bay area.

A distinctive demographic feature of the South Bay is the large concentration of ethnolinguistic minorities within the area (see map, next page). these minorities range from a small group of recently arrived Vietnamese Boat People to the large population of Hispanics residing in that area because of the proximity to Mexico. There is also a relatively large group of Filipinos who live in the area. Within the South bay as a whole, however, Anglos comprise the majority of the total population. Most of the ethnolinguistic groups, however, live in the southernmost regions of the South Bay. While this population distribution does not constitute barrios or ghettos (in the

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strict sense of small, isolated, ethnically homogeneous pockets), it is nevertheless clear to the observer the spcial character of an ethnically distinct community. It might be more appropriate to classify these communities as suburban barrios, where the specific ethnic characteristics are not as marked as in an urban barrio. One will hear a great deal of Spanish spoken, see many different peoples from varying ethnic backgrounds in stores and find stores that cater to the specific needs of each group. After the Hispanic, the Filipino population forms the largest ethnolinguistic community concentrated in a small area of the South Bay region. The Anglo population is scattered throughout the South Bay, particularly in the north and northeast. To some degree, there is a gradual decrease of ethnolinguistic minorities in the South Bay as one moves northward away from the border.

The proximity with Baja California, Mexico, accounts for a large number of Mexicans residing in the South Bay, and numerous businesses catering to the Mexican consumer. In spite of the recent and most devastating peso devaluation (from 27 pesos per dollar to 120 per dollar during this project duration), the South Bay continues to be a genuine binational community with profound common economic, social and educational interests. Until a few years ago, businesses geared to the Mexican consumer were relatively small and independent. In the last five years, several national chains of grocery, drug stores, and department stores have built brand new facilities near the border for the Mexican shopper, with bilingual staff, supervisors and managers.

As one moves north, businesses may still cater to the Mexican customer, but they are not as ubiquitous as in the South Bay area. Some of the large chain stores, such as Safeway, for example, advertise in the Mexican radio,

press and television stations to attract customers. These stores are often located in conspicuous places, adjacent to the border, or along the mesa paralleling the border. There is also a large concentration of businesses along the river plain which cuts through the mesa five miles to the north, although such businesses do not cater exclusively to Mexican customers. Because of the general commercial zoning, many kinds of businesses are located in the mesa: large auto junk yards, customs and brokerage warehouses (where transactions of goods to be transported to Mexico are stored), restaurants and large chain departments and food stores.

In addition to the commercial area there is a residential area in the South bay with single family homes, duplexes and large apartment complexes. In some cases, these residences are located right next to the small businesses, so that a resident of a single family home may have as neighbor a bakery or even a junkyard.

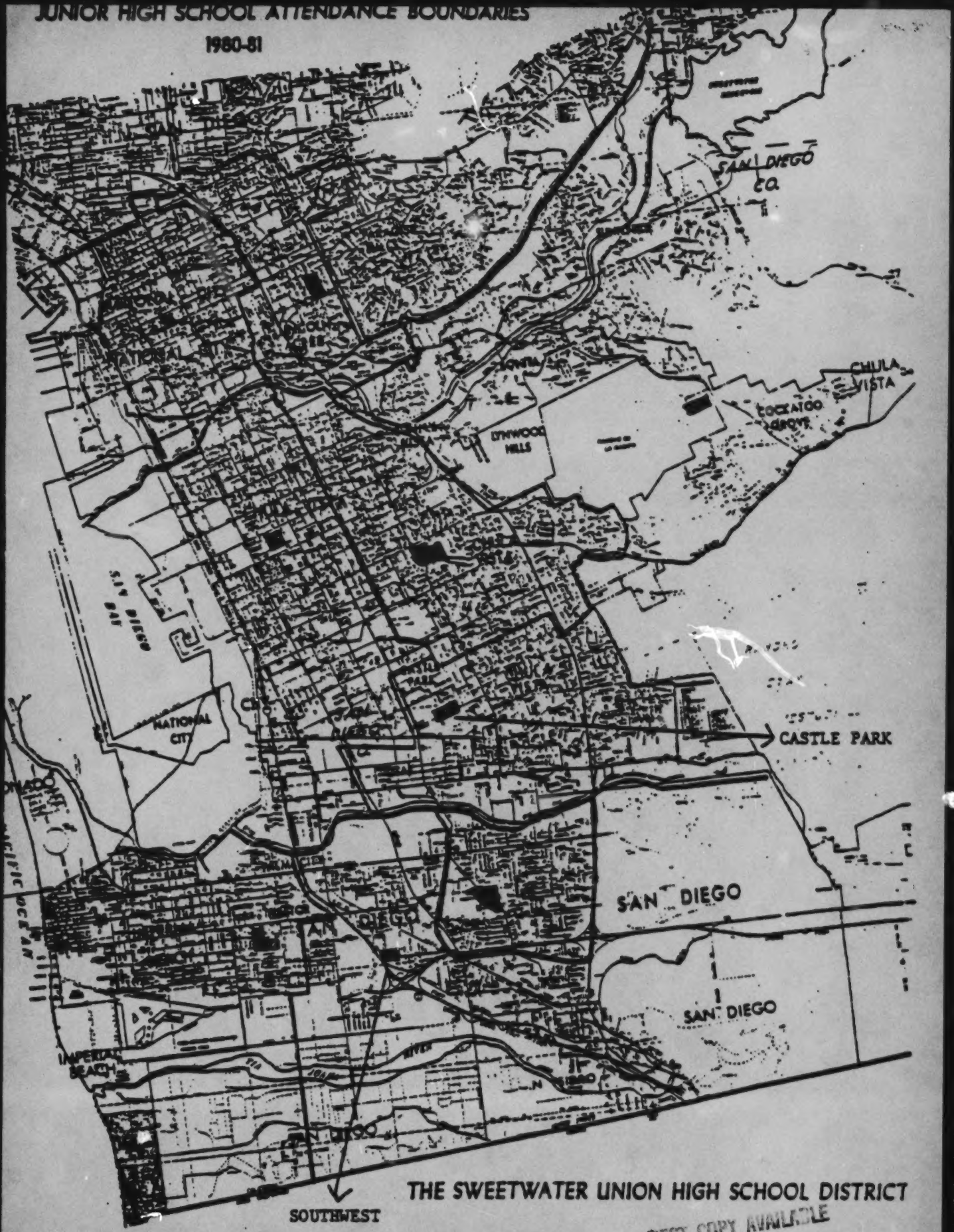
Communities Surrounding Schools Chosen for Study

At the outset of the project three junior schools were selected to participate in the study because of their ethnolinguistic minority population: Southwest, Castle Park and Montgomery. The first two schools have a large Hispanic population, and the third, a large concentration of Filipino. Initial interviews were carried on with personnel in each of the three schools. Eventually the school with the Filipino student population concentration was dropped because of difficulties in student recruitment, teacher participation, and support from school personnel.

Although we could not conduct research on the grounds of the Montgomery Junior High School, and could not interview parents and children, we were fortunate to recruit two teachers from that school for the training of teachers and the implementation of writing modules. What follows is a brief description of Castle Park and Southwest school areas.

According to district maps, the Castle Park area is bounded on the north by Oxford Street, on the south by the Otay River. It is bounded on the east by Interstate 805, and on the west by Third Street, but also extends, in one section, further west to Broadway Avenue. (See District Map, next page). (These boundaries correspond roughly to 1980 Census tracts 131.01, 132.01, 132.02, 133.03, and 133.04). The demographic characteristics described here are taken from two sources, a special Census undertaken in 1975, and the U.S. Census of 1980. Because the ethnic and racial categories are not similar across the two Census, only data relevant to the target population, primarily Hispanic, will be discussed in relation to the White population.

This community comes the closest to resembling a barrio than any other in the South bay. The students are drawn in great part from residences located among and between the large commercial zone that runs along the river plain. It has a distinctive Mexican barrio atmosphere with typical corner markets, fruit and taco stands that cater to the local residents and patrons of the many businesses along the large boulevard running east and west parallel to the river. In contrast to the South west area (described below), the low income units around the school are more rundown and the streets less well kept. Because it is very near the center of the commercial section there is a great deal of traffic around the school. Hispanics account for about 37% of



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the total population. This marks an increase of approximately 16% from 1975 to today.

The Southwest junior high community area covers the northeastern portion of the South Bay and extends south to the U.S./Mexican border. It is characterized by residential zones and better housing than Castle Park. The immediate surroundings of the school are conspicuously more affluent if compared with those of Castle Park. The Southwest school area has a 39% Hispanic and 15% Filipino population. The Sweetwater Union High School District includes the South Bay area, and has an overall 60% of minority students (43% Hispanics). In the past few years the district has been working with the Office of Civil rights to balance the ethnic population distribution among district schools in order to prevent over or underrepresentation of minorities. This process is still continuing and the district has made impressive gains in reducing the inequities in minority vs. non-minority representation. The South Bay schools, however, still have extremely high concentrations of minorities that continue to increase in spite of district efforts to distribute minority students in other schools.

The two schools chosen for this study have the highest concentration of minority students in the district: Castle Park has 62% minority (figures from October, 1981, data provided by the district), and 46.3% Hispanic. The two junior high schools with the lowest concentration of minority students have 35% and 44% minority, Hispanics, 18.1% and 33.4%, respectively. Three years ago, in 1978, the former school had 24.2% minority, and in 1977, the percentage was only 14.3%. In 1977, the latter school had 12.3%% minority. This has only shown less than a 5% increase in the past five years. The two target

schools have the lowest achievement scores in the district, and substantially lower if compared with predominantly White population schools.

It is noteworthy that while the ethnolinguistic minority student population comprises 60% to 62% of all students, the adult minority population is around 18% of the total. It should also be emphasized that the inverse relationship between academic achievement levels and minority concentrations in schools (the more concentration, the lower achievement) is valid also for other schools with lower percentages of ethnolinguistic minority student populations.

The Forms, Functions and Values of Literacy in Non-School Settings

Literacy understood as some kind of interaction with text may take many different forms and serve multiple purposes. When a social group uses different languages and these languages are used in functionally complemenary settings, it is likely that literacy in those languages fits in the social structure of the community in a complementary relationship. This means that the use of different languages through text tends to serve different purposes which could not be served with a single language. There is another element, however, that deserves some consideration. Literacy, or communication through text in more than one language is not a skill or a process that remains stationary; it moves with the social and cultural changes the community is undergoing. If the dominance of one language is felt because of an increased demand for such language, this dominance is also felt in communication via text. Demographic educational and economic changes determine literacy trends. Our brief ethnographic study describes some of the above trends and changing patterns in literacy, particularly as we examine youngsters whose families

have lived in this country longer; the particular forms, functions and values attached to literacy in the second and dominant language, English, are reflective of the acculturation of these families.

The following pages summarize our findings regarding forms, functions and values of literacy by providing a multiple matrix with the data gathered and a succeeding analysis of such data. Later, to give more detailed and precise information on the sociocultural context of literacy outside of school settings, we will present two case studies representative of both the more advanced and motivated youngsters. These case studies will give an idea of the type of family life they have, what socialization process they have undergone, and what kinds of aspirations their parents have regarding education and career accomplishments. The spectrum of forms and functions is organized into a continuum from the most simple to the most complicated. Although often some literacy forms can serve more than one function, and some functions are associated with different forms, in an attempt to simplify and clarify our data reduction and analysis we have presented the most frequent correspondence of forms to functions. Furthermore, the reduction of all functions to three clear-cut categories was selected in order to adapt to the actual data gathered; that is, the relative lack of forms and functions in certain categories suggested a simpler organization of functions. There is an increased complexity in the forms, going from simple consultation of guides, maps, catalogs, etc., to technical writing and reading of school textbooks, articles, or other sophisticated materials. This diversity of forms encompasses a broad spectrum of literacy materials used in literacy events observed in out of school settings, especially in the homes. What is important here is the relative frequency of some forms and their significance in the life style of young

students and their families. Likewise, the choice of three distinct categories of functions goes from the use of text to guide action immediately, through the use of text to acquire knowledge or information for its own sake (at various levels of complexity), and finally to the most esoteric use of text to further create, decipher or manipulate ideas, concepts, or other bodies of knowledge. That is, is conceived as the use of text for learning how to learn to learn, (function Z), opposed to the use of text to do (function X), or the use of text to learn (function Y). Here is the listing of forms, functions, and values:

Forms:

A Consultation of schedules, guides, shopping catalogs, pamphlets, maps, etc.

B Composition of brief notes: reminders, messages, requests, questions, invitations.

C Composition of lists and inventories: shopping lists, agendas, plans, maps, etc.

D Selective surface reading through: newspapers, journals, reports, other documents. Concomitant writing of notes, marks, focusing on issues.

E Reading of books and long articles for personal enjoyment, to satisfy curiosity, or to relax: novels, the bible, feature articles, polemics and controversies.

F Reading and writing technical materials of importance: rental forms, employment application forms, hospital admission forms, reports related to work (outside of school).

G Reading and writing reports associated with work outside of school.

H Reading and writing school work materials: poems, short stories, text-books, articles, book summaries, encyclopedias, formulas, technical or theoretical treatises.

Functions:

X Includes the reading and writing of simple materials to direct immediate

action in day to day interaction.

Y Refers to reading/writing of simple materials in order to learn, to know, for the purpose of obtaining enjoyment, relaxation and perhaps even some future direction of action.

Z Reading/writing to learn to learn, i.e., to organize and manipulate informational categories, analyze concepts, structure and synthesize bodies of knowledge, summarize and memorize highlights of knowledge.

Values:

If we conceive the value attached to literacy, especially to literacy in the second language (English), our data, once more, presents a whole spectrum from negative values attributed to reading and writing activities and skills, to very positive values. Often on, however, there seems to be a distinction between the skill to read and write from the actual engagement in reading and writing. The former tends to be seen, of course, as always more positive than negative (some type of skills is more valued than others, this is particularly true when physical and psychological survival is the top priority in a low income community; it should not surprise us that not all youngsters see the skills to read and write as important as we do). At any rate, if we were going to build a spectrum of values it would look something like the following:

|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|____|
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5 +6 +7 +8

Here is a brief description of values:

-4: Reading tasks are meaningless or irrelevant.

-3: Reading tasks are discouraging, or difficult, or in conflict with other obligations at home.

-2: Reading and writing is needed but painful, with litte rewards, especially if the teachers flunk you anyhow.

-1: Reading and writing is important some times, but by and large it

is boring, less enjoyable than many other things to do.

0: No position on reading and writing ("it is OK...")

+1: Reading and writing is necessary to fulfill parental expectations regarding school achievement.

+2: Reading and writing helps to learn how to do better some things, like cooking.

+3: Reading and writing allows you to gain self confidence, especially when you engage in conversations with other people.

+4: Reading and writing enhances your status, your quality of life, your self image, and the esteem others have for you.

+5: Reading and writing is necessary to find a good job.

+6: Reading and writing gives you mobility; allows you to know where you are, where you are going, both physically and spiritually (as when you read a map or the bible, or a good book).

+7: Reading and writing gives you the instruments to defend yourself, to understand what people are trying to do, and to be in control.

+8: Reading and writing gives you the chance to survive, especially if you are poor.

The main table with multiple information matrices entitled "Student Literacy in the Home: Forms, Functions and Values," (see next page) we present the data per student within each of the eight family units, chronologically within each family. This format will allow us to make some comparisons across families as well as within a single family across students, as well as within age or sex groups across families.

Much of what is said in the analysis will require further discussion. This discussion is at times postponed after the presentation of the case studies of students who seem to represent diverse stages of acculturation and adaptation to the U.S. The internalization of literacy functions seem to change drastically with further advance in acculturation to this country.

TABLE 1. STUDENT LITERACY IN THE HOME: FORMS, FUNCTIONS AND VALUES

GENERAL INFORMATION												LITERACY																							
												FORMS								FUNC-TIONS			VALUES													
SUBJECT'S CODE	RESEARCHER	AGE & SEX	GRADE	ENGL. PROF.	SPAN. PROF.	FA. ENGL. LIT.	FA. SPAN. LIT.	MO. ENGL. LIT.	MO. SPAN. LIT.	FAM. INCOME IN thousands	FAM. RESIDENCE IN U.S. -years	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	X	Y	Z	-4	-3	-2	-1	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8
1.1	DA	12F	7	1	1	0	0	2	1	9	3	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x							x						
1.2	DA	14F	9	2	1							x	x	x	x	x				x	x					x									
1.3	DA	19F	10	2	1							x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x					x								
2.4	DA	10M	5	1	2	0	3	0	3	8	14	x	x	x	x					x	x	x							x						
2.5	DA	15M	8	1	1							x	x	x	x		x			x	x	x							x						
3.6	BK	15F	9	1	2	0	3	0	0	7	16	x	x	x	x					x	x				x										
3.7	BK	16M	10	1	2							x	x	x	x					x				x											
4.8	BK	10F	5	1	3	0	2	0	2	10	13	x	x	x	x					x									x						
4.9	BK	11M	6	1	3							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x						x							
4.10	BK	12F	7	1	3							x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x							x						
4.11	BK	13M	8	2	2							x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x								x					
4.12	BK	14F	9	2	2							x	x	x	x	x				x	x	x								x					
4.13	BK	15F	10	2	2							x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x									x				
4.14	BK	16F	11	2	2							x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x										x			

Numbers applied to Language Proficiency and literacy mean the following: 1=high level, 2= middle, 3= low level. The symbol "x"= unranked presence.

Table 1. Student Literacy in the Home: Forms, Functions and Values (CONT.)

GENERAL INFORMATION												LITERACY																						
												FORMS								FUNCTIONS			VALUES												
SUBJECT'S CODE	RESEARCHER	AGE & SEX	GRADE	ENG. PROF.	SPA. PROF.	F. ENG. LIT.	F. SPA. LIT.	M. ENG. LIT.	M. SPA. LIT.	FAM. INCOME in thousands	FAM. RESID. in U.S.-year	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	X	Y	Z	-4	-3	-2	-1	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8
5.15	FS	13M	7	1	3	0	0	2	3	7	20		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x									x			
6.16	TW	10M	5	1	2	1	1	1	2	18	20	x	x	x	x					x	x	x					x							
6.17	TW	14F	9	1	2							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x									x		-	
6.18	TW	15M	10	1	2								x	x	x					x	x	x									x			
6.19	TW	18F	10	1	2							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x								x				
7.20	LL	12F	7	2	1	3	1	3	1	10	5	x	x	x	x					x	x	x							x					
7.21	LL	13F	8	2	1							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x												x
7.22	LL	14F	9	2	1							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x												x
7.23	LL	17F	12	2	1							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x												x
8.24	MG	11M	6	1	2	2	1	2	1	18	18	x	x	x	x					x	x	x									x			
8.25	MG	15F	10	1	2							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x											x	
8.26	MG	17M	12	1	2							x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x												x
8.27	MG	18M	12	1	2							x	x	x	x					x	x	x											x	

Symbols as above: as applied to Lang. Prof. & literacy levels, 1=high, 2=middle, 3=low; x=unranked presence.

Analysis of Student Literacy in the Homes

A simple analysis of the data summarized in the Matrix entitled "Student Literacy in the Home: Forms, Functions and Values" (see next pages) would look into the characteristics of the students' (sex, age, grade levels, language proficiency) the characteristics of their family (literacy in Spanish and/or English, length of residence in the U.S., family income) and, specifically, the forms, functions and values of literacy as observed in the home situation.

There were 27 students in our study, sixteen females and 11 males. Over half of them (fifteen) were between the ages of 12 and 15 years. These students are enrolled from 5th through the 12th grades, but over 50% of them (16 exactly) are in grades 7-10. The years of exposure to English varies from 3 years to their entire life. Most of them were either born in this country or arrived here when they were very small. In spite of this fact, their English language proficiency is in many cases lower than that of their Anglo counterparts. Presumably Spanish was the primary language of their home and community, and their opportunities to learn and use English were reduced in the particular socio economic and cultural circumstances in which they lived. Seventeen out of the 27 are totally fluent in English. The other ten are now acquiring English. Their loss of the Spanish language, however, is faster than their acquisition of the English language. Only eight of these students is totally fluent in Spanish, four have practically lost it, and fifteen manage to keep some competency which tends to deteriorate with time and schooling.

Most of the families studied were low income families with variable levels and often unpredictable. Some rent homes subsidized by the government in which they crowd large families. From the eight families studied here, the largest (which is the poorest) has a two bedroom. Nine persons sleep in two bedrooms, five of them in one room always, and two in the living room. the incomes are approximations calculated by the researchers who visited their homes and learned about parental occupations. The average income for these families is $10,875.00, and the average per capita is $3,222.00. The actual highest per capita is of $3,000.00, and the lowest is $1,111.00. There is some (not a strong) correlation between the length of residence in the U.S. and the level of income. There is a correlation between literacy levels of parents in Spanish and total family income. In many instances the functional literacy of parents is practically non-existent in either language. Only two fathers were fully literate in English, two others were fully literate in Spanish. The mothers showed the same distribution as the fathers. Mothers, however, were more often biliterate in some measure; five of them had some level of literacy in the two languages. There was no correlation between length of residence in the U.S. and parental literacy in either language. Although the matrix itself could not reveal it, we know that the actual placement of positive or negative value on literacy was often a reflection of parental value orientation and parental expectations (rather than a reflection of their own possession of literacy skills and the fruition of social benefits resulting from it).

Distribution of Forms, Functions and Values

The presence of a form or of function of literacy can say very little about the actual involvement in literacy events that a matrix has a limited heuristic value. Because during a number of observations some forms of literacy are bound to occur, qualitative assessment of literacy activities is needed to equally estimate the value of literacy for a student. Upon summarizing the data placed in the matrix we intend to elaborate on some literacy events so point at fundamental diferences of skill and motivation. Values place on literacy are more frequently the result of ideal statements of belief rather than an actual manifestation of conformity with a norm. Thus, for example, a child or a youngster may tell us that to read and write is a matter of life or death, truly important to get a job, to survive, etc., and yet we observed that person use his/her time in a way that shows he/she does not really care about reading or writing when the opportunity or need arises. These values, however, even if not actuated in practical day-to-day life, have a way of impacting students in the long run, and must be recorded in order to understand changes (often very sudden) in their school work and their interaction with text.

Regarding the forms of literacy, we found that all students, regardless of age and/or grade, at some time or another, use the first four forms:

A: Consultation of schedules, guides, shopping catalogs, pamphlets, maps, etc.

B: Composition of brief notes, reminders, messages, requests, questions, invitations, etc.

C: Composition of lists and inventories, shopping lists, agendas, etc.

D: Reading of newspapers, journals, reports, and composing of notes, marks, summaries...

There were marked differences in the use of these four forms of literacy by students. Some of them did it regularly, expeditiously and with an obvious know-how which contrasted with the occasional and tentative use of the same forms by other students. Particularly in the use of form D which entails both a selective approach to read through and to focus only on certain items, issues or themes, the interaction with text would clearly separate some students from the others in terms of levels of proficiency and the handling of information via text. More about this matter will be discussed later. Less than half of the students (thirteen to be exact) used form E, i.e., reading of books and long articles for personal enjoyment, to satisfy curiousity or to relax: novels, the Bible, feature articles, pieces on polemics and controversies. In a period of several months it is not surprising that so many of the students engaged in these literacy activities. However, only four of the students engaged regularly in these activities and two of them did it in connection with their religious commitment to the Bible and/or activities related to the Gospel. The implications of these statements are that most students did very little in the form of reading for enjoyment (an occasional involvement) and only two out of the 27 did in fact read diverse materials. The reading of the Bible, as commendable as it is, had obviously different functions and meanings, and its impact in school literacy must be qualified. The literacy context of reading the Bible is clearly different from reading on matters which have a more direct bearing and relationship to the school subject matters.

It should not be surprising that very few students were observed to use form of literacy F: reading and writing technical materials such as rental forms, employment application forms, hospital admission forms, reports related to work, etc. Two reasons come to mind: (1) These forms have to be confronted by the older students only when the need arises, and in the appropriate setting (the hospital, public office, place of employment, etc.), not in the house. (2) If some of these forms or technical reports related to work find their place in the home, the chances that the researcher be there to observe the event are almost non-existent. The same can be said of form G: reading and writing reports associated with work outside of school.

Finally over half of the students were observed to do some reading or writing associated with their school work. What is surprising is that not all of the students were doing that kind of work systematically every day, and that only sixteen of them were observed to do that work. Of course, it is possible that many of the students find their homes too crowded and difficult of a place to read or study. This is indeed perfectly understandable. the researchers' hunch, however, is that there was virtually no serious interaction with school related text outside of the home for most students, and that the actual interaction with text revealed often serious problems with reading, writing and making sense of the text. In the relatively few cases of consistent and frequent interaction with text we found very clear, predictable and goal-oriented literacy practices. To illustrate our findings and the contrast with most other students, we will present two case studies.

To protect the anonimity of families and students we will use fictitious names; but we will reduce editorial comments to let the reader catch the flavor of the actual home interaction in each case study.

FIRST CASE STUDY: FAMILY I

Family I lived in two different places while the observations took place. At the beginning of the fieldwork in San Ysidro; towards the end they moved to Imperial Beach, close to Sorthwest Jr. High School. The two subjects Alma and Perla went to Southwest Jr. High for the entire obervation period. The members of the family were four daughters and their mother:

Alma	12 yrs.
Perla	14 yrs.
Carmen	7 yrs.
Ofelia	19 yrs.
Elizabeth	54 yrs (mother)

The area in which they lived, border low and middle income areas. The racial composition of that neighborhood in San Ysidro was fairly balanced between Mexican-Americans, American-Anglos and Black-Americans. The area in which they are presently living is a low income are government subsidized under Section 8 of the Housing and Urban Development Division. The neighborhood seems to be basically composed of Mexican-Americans.

This family has strong feelings in support of literacy both in and out of the home. The grandmother who was an elementary school teacher in Tijuana, still teaches part-time as a tutor. Her influence on her daughter resulted in Elizabeth's ability to be totally literate in Spanish. Elizabeth's view of

literacy in this country is that her children need it in order to work more comfortably than she has. She herself, does not read nor write in English. She relinquishes duties such as form filling, check writing, bill payment and letter writing to her daughters. She seems to have given Alma, jobs of literacy more often than the other daughters. Alma is quite capable in English or Spanish, to comply with her mother's literacy needs in English.

Alma seems to be a young academician in that she has excelled since her enrollment in school in the U.S. She is totally fluent in English and Spanish. She has maintained a high grade point average in the school years she has completed. She is expected to comply with almost all of the literacy demands in the home for her mother. On much of the observations, she was seen with materials in her hand either from school, from some family financial endeavor or for her own leisure enjoyment.

Perla seems to be a young lady with much domestical ability who is expected to have little academic ability. She has done poorly in school and at home is asked to do more domestic chores than Alma. She is given few opportunities to use her literacy skills at home while she is expected to fulfill domestic demands. Literacy events observed were as follows:

1. Filling in forms (rental agreements, contracts, IRS)
2. Handling business transactions (Stanly, Avon, Jafra)
3. Filling out checks (paying bills)
4. Reading novelas (Spanish)
5. Doing homework
6. Making lists (chores and groceries)

7. Writing letters (English and Spanish)

8. Translation from English to Spanish and vice-versa (notes, letters)

The bulk of literacy events for personal enjoyment was concentrated in Spanish novelas, although on two occasions, Alma mentioned that she enjoyed reading library books in English.

As seen above, the basic literacy events that occur in thehomes are those of basic social survival. The children are expected to handle matters related to school, such as schedules or bulletins, that is, to translate to their mother. On few occasions she would try to translate items herself.

In the payment of bills, filling out of checks, and filling out forms, the moter teams up with the children to seek their translation and then dictate in Spanish the relevant information to be written in English by the child. The child, therefore, is to complete the literacy activity in English as instructed. In several events as seen in the observation notes, these affairs have been inadequately understood and the children made a few errors that resulted in returned papers and requests denied.

Alma appeared to be the most geared and expected to perform within and outside of the home at a high literacy level. She is relied upon heavily not only by the mother to do her form filling, etc., but other married daughters assign her their tasks that require English literacy as well.

On few occasions the mother actually enacted literacy events such as: list making for shopping at the store or for domestic chores. Elizabeth also stated that she read many novelas in the evening before she went to sleep.

Perla is not expected to be a functioning literate in the home. She has not done well in school. Whether her low academic performance has caused low level of literacy expectations in the home, or the low expectations by her mother has created lower academic performance is difficult to explore in a limited study like this (for detailed field note samples see Appendix D, "Extended Field Notes", Hausen-Arce, March 14, 1982 through April 28, 1982).

Situation One: Alma and Perla were both in the living room. The mother coes home from work and finds the home in a mess. She also has the mail in her hand. She tells Perla quite bruskly that she has left the house in a mess, she is not fulfilling her duty and immediately sends her into the kitchen to do the dishes. Alma tells her mother to let her see the mail. In the mail is a form to be filled out. The mother asks Alma to fill the form in a tone of voice that is calm. Her tone of voice to Perla was loud and demonstrated anger. Alma goes to the kitchen table to fill out the form and Perla shouts out to her in Spanish, similar to school girl, which are quite offensive to Alma. Alma retorts back that Perla is so dumb that she is treated like a domesticated animal (dog and mule).

The evidence that Perla has engendered the domestic role and Alma the "studious" role is demonstrated by the mother's reinforcement of such behaviors. Also the reinforcement from each other, even though it is negative, has contributed to the evolution of those roles. Which in conclusion, refects that literate behavior, will generate more literacy. Reinforced roles

of behaviors that replace that literate behavior, will generate fewer events of literacy.

Situation Two. The youngest family member of this family is Carmen, who is a Down's Syndrone Child. She is pampered and given a great deal of attention by all family members, especially her mother. She does rather average in school, a special school for Down's Syndrome Children. When Carmen is requested to be helped at home with her homework, she gets great attention delegated by the mother. She is instructedd by the mother to be helped than by none other than Perla. Alma is not asked to assist in Carmen's work.

It seems that the attitude of the mother in this instance is quite contradictory of her support of Perla as a domestic functioner rather than a literate performer. Yet, as seen in this situation, she is depended upon and demanded to sit with her little sister. It might be presumed that Perla has patience because she understands that Carmen is rather slow mentally. Where Alma, who cannot tolerate mental slowness due to her own gifted capabilities, qould not be able to sit down as Perla and understandingly assist Carmen as tutor. In conclusion, literacy evnets in this home are viewed quite individually, depending much upon the condition and situation that encompasses the literacy events.

The field researcher asked Perla about school. Here are the researcher's notes (March 14, 1982).

> "It seems like she doesn't want to talk about school, because she tells me that the boys are the only thing she like about Junior High so far...I asked her what her grades were in 6th grade. She says that she got almost all A's. I ask her what are the grades like now? She says just about passing. I ask her what the difference is..., she says that the teachers aren't as nice in Junior High and that she gets mad at a lot of teachers this year, even more than

> last year, so they flunk her. I ask her if she thinks they flunk her on purpose. She says "los gringos, Si" "the gringos, yes." ...She says that the "gringos hablan demasiado English and they think when you are talking Spanish that you are talking about them. She says one teacher she has gets all red in the face and sends people out on referrals if they talk Spanish, and then he starts to laugh."

Originally the role of Perla in the home had been that of a domestic in charge of menial and manual jobs (coding, cleaning, tending the younger sibling, Carmen, who has Down Syndrome). From the above quotation we realize that Perla is also unhappy in school and perceives certain teachers as unreasonalbe and purposefully hurtful, vindictive and uninspiring. This profile of the less literate sister, Perla is confirmed from other observations, such as the following: "I as Perla if she reads novelas. She responds: 'No.' I ask Alma and Perla if they have any homework. Perla started laughing and she says yes: 'washing dishes, cleaning the bathrooms, vacuuming, a lot of homework...' Alma told her to shut up, adding 'mensa' ('stupid') for emphasis."

The contrasting role of Alma comes across in the field notes:

> "I leaf through Carmen's diary, which is written in English by her teacher at Ann Daly School... She reports on Carmen's progress and on what practice she needs at home for skills she works on in class. The following response in the book is a paragraph written in English--from Carmen's mother. She responds daily to inform the teacher of how she feels about what is happening, or if she has any questions or feedback that might interest the teacher. I ask Alma who writes the response, she says that her mom dictates and either she or Ofelia do the writing."

Alma brings in the mail, and directly hands it to her mother. The mother hands it back to her and asks her what there is... The mother gives the daughter permission to look through the mail and tell her what there is..."

Literacy for survival in a new society in which English proficiency is as important as an understanding of the social and cultural system becomes the most crucial responsibility of youngsters in the homes of Mexican-Americans who migrated to the U.S. This responsibility, however, is unequally shared, almost as if the parents would cast roles and ascribe literacy responsibilities, preferably to the older girls. Domestic chores then become the responsibility of the other children whose literacy skills are not as salient. Literacy in Spanish, as was the case of the mother in this family, did influence one of the daughters at least in the reading of the novelas in Spanish, which encouraged Alma to do likewise. The repeated observations of the misunderstandings the youngsters (including Alma and Ofelia) had regarding housing forms and the demands for functional literacy on issues related to non-school matters, reveals the struggles and problems these families have to go through. What would seem most natural and understandable in some middle class homes, becomes truly incomprehensible for the youngsters and their parents.

SECOND CASE STUDY: FAMILY II

Family II lived for the entire period in the same South San Diego residence. The young man that was target of the observation (Jorge, Jr.) was attending Montgomery Jr. High School for the entire period of field observations. The family consisted of the father, mother, three sons and one daughter.

Jorge	M	39	(Parents)
Angelica	F	32	
Jorge, Jr.	M	14	

Michael	M	7
Gabriel	M	10
Carla	F	5

The area in which the live is low middle income. The racial composition of the neighborhood is balanced between Black-Americans, Filipino-Americans and Mexican-Americans. The area is also a Section 8, Housing and Urban Develcpment Decision project area.

The Family is composed of six members. Jorge and Angelica are the parents of the target, Jorge Jr., who is 14 years of age and is in the 8th grade. He has two smaller brothers, Gabriel and Michael, both of which are in elementary school. The youngest family member is Carla, who is 5 and is in kindergarden presently. Mr. Casillas works at National Steel as a wasteman and Mrs. Casillas does not work.

The membership of Family II is much larger. Those listed above are presently residing iin the home. The mother, who works as a hotel maid, is the only living parent. Her mother, a retired school teacher from Tijuana, sometimes lives with the family. Ofelia, the oldest daughter at home is 19 years of age. The two target students are Alma, who is in the 7th grade and Perla who is in the 8th grade. Carmen, 6 years of age, is the youngest child in the home. The eldest brother Pedro, who is 25 years of age lives at home sometimes.

Family II does not have strong support in their daily routine for literacy. The faily is interested in social events that focus on acceptance of their children in mainstream society. This is evidenced by the pressure

put on the children being able to speak fluently in English and Spanish, but not as great a concern about whether they are able to write or read well. The parents were both educated in Tijuana up to the elementary level. Once in the U.S., their education has not been extended. They believe that their children will do well if they are able to communicate, but have expressed no great concern about their academic progress.

Jorge seems to be a rapidly maturing young man who has a lot of authority in the home. Apparently, the father is absent quite often, and he being the oldest son, assumes role as father at times when his mother requests or needs his assistance. His mother depends upon his authority regularly to help discipline the other children. He spends little time on literacy events, other than homework. He does below average in his school work but excellent in sports. The literacy events observed were:

1. Reading the newspaper (English and Spanish)
2. Filling out forms (Section 8 and Welfare)
3. Reading novelas (Spanish)
4. Doing homework
5. Translation from Spanish to English (on television, product labels and school bulletins)

Jorge is not required to do more than his homework and succeed, barely passing, but succeed in school. He performed few literacy tasks in the home other than simple translation and homework.

Angelica, the mother did not perform any literacy events other than reading one short Spanish novela excerpt that was laying on the kitchen talbe one afternoon.

Situation One: Jorge has a great deal of newspapers on the kitchen table ready to read. He is looking for an article to complete a current event assignment for school. It is due the next day. His mother tries to help him so that he can accomplish his goal. They even recruit the observer to pitch in and help. The quality of the completed assignment is not above average. But the mother and the target student, Jorge, are satisfied to have it completed.

As long as Jorge completes the assigned work, he is performing within the mother's expectations and his own. Jorge is not concerned about being a good student, but about being accepted by the school as a passable one. If his is passable in the school, he is fulfilling the expectations that he has of himself and that his parents have of him as well. In conclusion, this attitude reflects that literacy behavior for Jorge is relevant to the fact that he needs to be socially acceptable in the schools; his literacy is a tool for social success.

Literacy for survival in this family has very similar characteristics as in other families. Jorge translates from Spanish to English and from English to Spanish in order to comply with literacy demands than his parents themselves find unsurmountable. The emphasis, however, is on his role as surrogate father due to the long absences of his own father. He is in charge of keeping law and order in the home, and, to a lesser extent, of managing the literacy demands from the outside world. His actual reading and writing

skills are poor. The field observer noted the following:

> "Jorge asks me if I will help him with his essay by reading over what he has already written. I do so. I tell him read it out loud to me after I correct it mentally. I do so. I tell him to stop whenever he's unsure of the spelling or of writing the correct way. He stops on many occasions. In fact, it takes us about 12 minutes to read 3/4 of a page. He stops. I ask him what he thinks is wrong or how could he write it so it sounds better." (April 5, 1982)
>
> "Today Jorge didn't go to school. He said he felt bad with a cold, so he didn't go. I asked him if he feels well enough to be absent. He says sure--he really is OK, but he just has a lot of 'flojera' (laziness) lately. He is watching TV." (April 12, 1982). (For a more complete account of the incidents leading to similar student profiles in the home, see Appendix D, "Interviews--Jorge Casillas."

Some Contrasts Between Family I and II Regarding Literacy

The attitudes toward literacy in English has similar perspectives. English is necessary to survive; English text is difficult and it is the responsibility of the older children to cope with English literacy demands for out of school purposes such as rental forms, official communication with public agencies, etc. Both families have a similar ideal position regarding literacy and the parents speak in great support of literacy activities in the home. However, in real life, their support for specific literacy tasks is differentially allocated. In the case of Family I this support is allocated primarily to the older daughter who seems to be the most capable. This support is clearly denied to Perla, even when she seems to be in great need of such support just to be able to cope with school demands. Family II offers support to Jorge, but there is no clear accountability from Jorge to his mother. Jorge is given the key role of surrogate father (because the father is absent), and the mother is not capable of demanding that Jorge complies

with school literacy demands. In fact, the mother does not seem to be doing much about Jorge's occasional truancy. The same researcher worked with the two families, and she has compared their views on literacy (in Spanish) as follows:

	Family I	Family II
1.	Una persona que lee mucho, lee mucha literature. Tengo que preguntar a mi mama (abuela). Ella dice que es una persona que se instruye leer y escribir bien. Si es importante porque la persona que lee pueda tener una buena conversacion. 100% literato en mi opinion es que lean y escriban bien. Estudiar, leyendo, escribiendo se entiende--se defiende, mientras mas que leyas y mas te puedes estar bien en la vida.	Ser literato es una persona que sabe leer y escribir tanto que es necesario. Es importante para que se puede conseguir buen trabajo. Para mis hijos, es importante porque quiero que consigan trabajos buenos.
2.	El valor de ser literato es poder entender bien a la gente y poder bien defenderse en la vida. Uno puede hablar de cualquier sujeto sin meido. Pueda sentir confianza en cualquiera situacion. Sirve en que vea la television para saber cuales son las personas que se ensena; sirve para manejar al trabajo para saber a donde va uno; para estudiar; leer por gusto; en algunos trabajos de reportar su obra hecho; para cocinar; para informarse de varios sujetos.	Las razones porque opino es importante ser literato es tener menos dificultades en la vida. Uno que sabe leer y escribir puede hacer casi lo que quisiera sin tener problemas con no entender algo...no poder entender lo que le dice la gente. Uno que sabe leer puede estudiar lo que quisiera para tener mas educacion y poder vivir mas agusto.
3.	Pues todos mis hijos pueden leer y escribir o en ingles o en espanol o en los dos idiomas. Yo creo que soy normal en comparacion a las demas personas. La personas con quien trabajo saben leer y escribir tambien. Yo creo que he tenido un poco mas escuela que las otras trabajadoras porque mi mama fue profesora.	En nuestra familia mi esposo y yo fuimos a la primaria en Tijuana. Mis hijos estan en la escuela aqui. Las notas que me han llevado, para mi, han estado satisfactorios. Pueden hablar bien en espanol y tambien de lo que entiendo, el ingles. Para decirte que nivel estamos, soy la unica que habla el ingles mocho, mi esposo y mis

		hijos lo hablan y lo entienden.
4.	Leo diario como unos 20 minutos--pero de escribir--escribo diario en mi trabajo rutinario. Tambien cuento la cantidad de pedazos que uno se pone en cada cuarto (le es una ayudante de un hotel). Luego en la casa para llenar y firmar cheques. A veces tengo que llenar biles (cuentas). Una vez cada dos semanas o le pongo a las muchachas que me lo hagan. Hago apuntes para ir a la tienda, o a las muchachas para que hagan sus quehaceres. Yo creo que escribo o igual o menos a que las demas personas.	Pues, yo no escribo mucho--les digo a mis hijos que me apunten unas cositas--pero casi nunca escribo. Hace mucho que estaba en la seccion *8 que tuve que llenar papeles. Yo creo que otras personas que trabajan escriban mas que yo.
5.	Si es importante porque pueda desarrollar una vida adaptable a varias ocasiones. Bien se hace la vida pudiendo ser educado y adaptada a varios ambientes.	Si es importante porque uno no puede comunicar esencialmente en una emergencia. Mis hijos hablan por mi y podrian escribir para mi--pero a veces me hacen falta y no puedo hacer cosas necesarios. Cosas como llenar formas. Para mi--es muy importante poder leer en el idioma que platican--asi es que en Tijuana me sirve mucho poder escribir espanol. Aqui me hace mucha falta no poder escribir en ingles y no leerlo.
6.	Miscellaneous Questions Description of home.	
	The family is moving, so they had quite a few boxes in the house. They had nice furniture (seemed to match). The home was cluttered but clean. The exterior was neatly kept (lawn cut, flower beds weeded, house recently painted).	The home is in the Del Sol area. It is sparsely furnished, but clean and recently painted. The exterior is well managed with recent paint. It is in a setting (rental) where the landscape is kept by a gardener.
	Description of neighborhood	
	The neighborhood was southern San Ysidro, around Dairy Mart Road. These are rather new homes (about 4 years old). The family is renting the home under	The region of Del Sol is rather low income. The homes are between 8-10 years old. The racial and cultural populace is basically Mexican-American, Pan-Asian,

the Section *8 funding. Mixed minorities and cultures in this low income area.	Black and other Hispanic. Few Anglos seem to live in the area.

* A HUD funding project.

Obviously Family I has had great exposure to reading and writing (the grandmother was a teacher in Tijuana), but neither family has had exposure to english prior to their arrival. In fact Family II has been in this country for fourteen years, while Family I only for three. The time factor has not made much difference in the case of Family II, and a more crucial factor with respect to literacy in the home is the previous exposure to text in their own language. While Family II makes statements fairly detached from the reality of the use of text, Family I shows the commitment to become competent in reading and writing in English at any cost. Family I spends a great more time in reading and writing activities. The moter spends twenty minutes a day reading novelas. In fact they had plenty of novelas in their bedroomm, and they were obviously used up. Family II is not committed to dealing with text, but rather attempts to avoid dealing with text in English and in Spanish. The incomes off these two families are comparable, their living style similar, but the chances of success in school looks much better for Family I.

The conclusions of the researchers who observed these two families is important and relevant here:

> "Mentioning parent literacy events in a teacher's estimation is important in this observer's opinion. Parents that teach their children via modeling behavior, will find their children more prepared to face and complete literacy events. This conclusion is based on the fact that this has been an observation from the observer's personal teaching experience. Those children who have not had literacy as an important modeled event in the home by the parents, will probably have a low estimation for being literate.

Also, parent expectation plays a major role in the literacy children demonstrate in the home. If the adult expects the child to perform within their literacy capacity in the home, the child will in fact perform and become literate. On the other hand, if the parent expects the child to not perform literately in the home, the child will not expect of him/herself to perform within the home literately. Perhaps this might extend outside of the home as well. Perhaps this is the reason that Perla is not doing too well in the school. Perhaps this is the reason that Alma does so well in school."

Based on observations that the observer has experienced, the following conclusions are made:

1. The predominant home attitude towards literacy and the events that demonstrate such, are conditional as to parental modeling, parental role support and parental expectations.

2. The predominant home attitude towards literacy determines the amount of literacy events, other than those related to school, that occur in the home.

3. The predominant home attitude towards literacy varies among children and their roles within the family and don't always appear to be consistent.

4. If the family is socially conscious of their image outside of the home, the presence of an observer can elicit behaviors that normally would not occur if the observer were not there.

THIRD CASE STUDY: FAMILY III

This family, the G. family, is in the working class. They live in a new partially subsidized two bedroom apartment. There is a color television, stereo, and a car. The father, 70 years old, receives social security and disability as a retired farm worker. One daughter receives some AFDC for an infant son. The father also has adult children who assist him--for example, he drives cars which once belonged to his daughter. The household members include a 20 year old daughter with a 5 month old son, a 16 year old son, and a 15 year old daughter. Mr. G.'s wife died many years ago. Those at home represent the last of Mr. G.'s twelve children.

All children currently at home were born in the United States. The family has moved many times between Central California and San Diego. All children speak some non standard Spanish, but will most often speak English to friends. The father speaks only Spanish, though he may have a passive vocabulary in English due to his extended exposure. All conversations with the father are in Spanish. An example of the differences of language usage can be seen in television viewing. When the father is not around, the children will watch English language stations or HBO. When the father is home, the television is usually set on a station from Mexico.

Though all adult children of the G. family live in the United States, there are still some ties to Mexico. Mr. G. frequently visits a relative in Tecate, he also shops, visits friends, and sees doctors in Tijuana. Current events in Mexico are followed by the father through newspapers and television news from Mexico. The children have no special interest in Mexico nor any strong connection to it; they have acculturated into the "cholo" lifestyle in dress, tattoos, language, and neighborhood identification. The son has had trouble with the police regarding his alleged gang affiliation. While two different cultures operate within the family, the father is still the dominant figure in the unit, commanding respect and obedience, in a traditional Mexican form.

Situation One (March 8, 1982): The G. family lives in a new rent-subsidized apartment in San Ysidro. There are two bedrooms and five members of the family, Mr. G., Susan (21) with five month old baby, Luis (brother, 16), and Jackie (15), attending Southwest Junior High. The observer has known the family for over five years, having most contact with Mr. G. and Jackie.

When first entering the house at 19:00, Jackie and Luis were in bedrooms, Susan cooking, and Mr. G. watching Spanish language TV. The only reading material visible in the front section of the house is that day's Tijuana newspaper. Upon arrival, Mr. G. called Jackie out of the back room, because in this instance I was her "guest", since the study was understood to be mainly about her. Jackie seemed somewhat distracted, as if I were interrupting something. It came out that she was reading the Bible in the back room and wanted to continue what she was doing. Once I assured her she could do whatever she wanted, she went back into her room and brought back some folded papers and a Bible.

19:13 Jackie and I seated at the kitchen table with her materials. She seems a little more comfortable now. We talk about what my role is. She agrees that Hispanic students have problems with reading and writing in school. She wants to help me improve how students are taught. However, she still is having trouble with the concept of an "observer" in the household. We talked about friends that might want to participate in the project and what she thinks about writing. Jackie describes herself as being a "good writer," but not too good in math. She talked about a homework assignment she was going to work on that night for Social Studies--writing about life for Mexican-Americans in the U.S.

Situation Two: Jackie says that she does most of her homework at the kitchen table because it has the best light. (By now the baby has been placed on the table and is watching us.) She also likes to write poems and other short pieces for herself. She saves them and shows them to friends, sometimes reading them aloud to each other, sometimes letting a friend copy the writing,

sometimes copying the writing of a friend. She showed me a copy of "A Cholos Life", one of the folded papers. It was a private work that I believe she was planing to modify or expand into a class assignment.

19:25 Jackie started to read the Bible, then took another stab at understanding my role. Was I like a spirit looking over the family? Watching but not visible. I affirmed the analogy.

19:28 Jackie begins reading the Bible at the table. I am writing. She pauses to ask me the meaning of a word she runs across. She reads aloud in a low voice. Typical reading style or just for difficulty material? Don't know.

16:00 Jackie watching "Afterschool Special" on a teenage father. Susan and baby taking a nap. Mr. G. and Luis at court. We talk about the movie and schools we go to. I ask her about her teachers. She alternates reading and English every six weeks.

16:34 - 17:45 Jackie receives a series of phone calls from friends while continuing to watch television. These include school friends and church friends with whom she discusses religion. In one call she asks the person about a paper called "Vato Loco" that I believe she wrote. It was passed around among some friends of her brother's and she wanted the original back so she could make some copies of it for her friends.

17:47 S. came into the living room with baby. J. plays with baby though not really saying much to him.

17:57 Mr. G. and Luis arrive with friends. There were Tijuana newspapers on the dining room table.

19:43 I asked to borrow "A Cholo's Life" that J. had written for her friends. She said yes but she wanted to copy it first.

20:00 Luis and Susan in back room. Mr. G. watches television.

20:15 As Jackie copies "A Cholo's Life", she pauses every few moments to talk about Cholos and the way people are treated because of their appearance. We talked about the various stereotypes that people have about different racial groups. J. was talking about what she was writing. She was using me as a sounding-board for her ideas. I believe she was trying to change "A Cholo's Life", a personal piece of writing, into something to be turned in as an assignment for Social Studies.

The field worker's notes are indeed revealing of the climate within the home, and the nature of the literacy events occurring there. Jackie, the 15 year old 9th grader who is the focus of the study, "tries to read a little bit every day." She also likes writing, especially about the Mexican-Americans, but she feels she has problems with math. Here are some of the quotations of the field worker:

> "Jackie anxious to get to her reading homework...Jackie likes to write poems and save them...Showed me a copy of 'Cholo's Life'... Jackie has been serious about religion for at least two years...When Jackie first came out she brought both the Bible and to or three papers..."
>
> The observer discusses the importance of Mexican newspapers in the home, and the profound religious commitment to reading and writing matters related to the Bible.

Jackie shows the observer more written materials she produced: "She called in for me. She wants me to make copies of 'A Cholo's Life' and asked me to make copies of "Mi Vida Loca" a church pamphlet. She wants copies to take to a high school MECHA meeting "About Gang Fights."

Undoubtedly one of the strongest motivational forces behind the writing efforts of Jackie is her belief in a vocation and christian mission to help "Raza." But writing does not come easy. Examine, for example, the attached handwritten manuscript of "A Cholo's Life" (see next page). For your convenience a transcription, as is, will be typed here:

"A CHOLO'S LIFE"

A cholo is the one who rights (crossed out, and replaced by) writes on the walls walking slowly through the hall he spends his time with His friends. It never seems to end a cholo's life is never right when ever he drinks and smokes all night. In the morning he awakes thinking of what to do all day. they never seem to care about the People that Love them alot. Like Jesus Christ and there family. Like their mouthers that allways stay up all night hoping that there son won't die. But the cholos say I Don't care what my hifitas say. Like I Said dont seem to care they think shooting up is going to mack them feel Realy good Pero Save que It Dont get you no where But to the pit. Just if they could Realyze that Jesus Christ cares for tem and whant them to have a Better Live then Shooting up go Gang B...inding fighting over Barrois, Killing they'er mismas Raza Smifing Pamt get high writing on the walls Hey Jesus has Something Better than that Its emternal Life. What I mean by Enternal Life Is the Reale Happiness. When your sleeping in the ally or by your Self all Lonley and and misarbel Jesus Is wright by your Self Why dont you give him a chance in your life he isn't going to heart you he wants to help you all you cholos out there in the street or at home or shooting up somthing in you —?— that isnt good talking Back to your hifitas or hifitos give them a Big Big hug and tell them I LOVE YOU ALOT MOM OR DAD Dont Be a Shame or dont get in Bares Because your withe you homies tell them te QUIERE MUCHO and just Rembember If any Budy tells you about the Lord Dont shime them because they telling you like It is, Just remenbe Jesus Christ Loves you alot. God Bless You

AlRato God BLESS YOU

Jackie Gutierrez

Comments on the document transcribed. The effort and time spent in producing such document was considerable. The punctuation, spelling, syntax, organization of sentences and basic structuring of sentences is indeed a serious problem. What is fascinating is that Jackie could read with excellent intonation and even eloquence these lines, with proper pauses and convincing tone. Going from the spoken to the written word does involve many and sophisticated skills. A strong motivation is an essential part, but the need for instruction and coaching are undeniable. Many of the students who entered the implemented instruction (see the following section of this report) began their writing instruction even with less skills than Jackie.

FOURTH CASE STUDY: FAMILY IV

This family is at the lower end of the working class. They moved to San Ysidro from Tijuana during the summer of 1981. The father, in his 60's, came to the U.S. illegally as a farm worker in the 1940's, and has worked throughout the Southwest from Texas to California. He married late and now has eight children ranging in aage from 7 to 16. For a few years the father maintained an apartment in San Ysidro while the family lived in a house in Tijuana. The father decided to move the whole family up to San Ysidro at great financial sacrifice. His reasons included wanting to be near his family and procuring an improved education for his children. The entire family is now living in a small 2 bedroom trailer. They have an old black and white television, an old car, and no phone. The father receives some retirement/disability benefits. The family also earns money by engaging in the cottage industry of their Tijuana colonia--macrame flower pot hangers. A person provides the material and pays 70 cents for each hanger. As many as

four family members may be engaged in weaving at any one time.

The members of the family are:

Mr. C. in his 60's, and Mrs. C in her 50's

Evangelina	7	F	Juan Antonio	13	M
Marilina	10	F	Elizabeth	14	F
Jose Luis	11	M	Melida	16	F
Maria de Jesus	12	F	Isabel	15	F

Six daughters and two sons.

All children but the youngest one attended school in Tijuana. They appear to be quite literate in Spanish and have good study habits. The oldest daughter graduated from 'secundaria' in Mexico. The children all attend schools in San Ysidro, and are enrolled in bilingual programs. The eldest attends adult school ESL classes. Both parents were forced to drop out of school to work, but seem to be functionally literate in Spanish. Spanish is the only language used in the home, and no interactions with outsiders were observed where anyone had to resort to English. All television viewing is on Mexican channels. The children show no sign of adapting to the Chicano/"Cholo" culture of the area. Their dress and behavior patterns remain Mexican.

The C. family lives in a 3-room trailer in San Ysidro. The family recently moved to the US from Tijuana and were enrolled in American schools in the Fall of 1981, their first extensive exposure to English. The target child is E., aged 14, a ninth grader at Southwest Junior High. All interaction among family members and with the observor is in Spanish.

Situation One (March 24, 1982): The situation is presented as the observer noted:

10:21 Arrived, oldest sister was in the kitchen/dining area and the rest of the family was at the market. There were calendars and other posters on the wall (in Spanish), including a letter to parents from Beyer Middle School. There was an English handwriting book on the table (I think it was a textbook).

18:15 Family arrives, exchanges greetings, then unloads groceries.

18:28 Sr. and Sra. tell me about Sr. trip to a Compensatory Education Convention he is to go on the next day. Sr. is on some school advisory committee for Willow Elementary. We discuss the various forms and vouchers for the trip. This topic came up because Sr. wanted my help in cashing a food money check he was given by the District. I helped after the observation.

18:25 - 18:40 During the conversation with the parents, five of the children sat at the dining-room table and were writing from out of the Writing Text. There seemed to be no parental instruction to do this activity, but I am still not sure if it happened just because I was there. E. moved into the back room and would remain there most of the evening.

18:40 - 18:48 Sr. has the children show off their reading ability. Maria, 7th grade, reads from a sheet titled "Spelling List" that has about 20 sentences in Spanish and English, such as "I did not do my homework." She reads them slowly, but accurately, in English, very effectively in Spanish. The 1st grader read in Spanish from a sentence she copied at school. The parents are very proud of the progress of their children and they point out to

me how far they have progressed since the beginning of the school year.

Situation Two (April 8, 1982): This situation is best understood by following the chronological sequence of observations.

18:50 - 19:10 There is more movement now. 4 of the 8 children are still at the table, helping each other with math or writing. Sra. is moving in and out of room. She helped one of the boys with a math problem. She is helping E. try on some new clothes in the back. I find out the names and ages of all the children. Sr. encourages me to check the math homework of Maris, which I do.

19:12 Children seem to relax more as they eat some desert and they begin to discuss topics among themselves. The eldest is preparing desert.

19:18 Sra. helps one of the younger ones to write her name by giving her a sample.

19:22 Maria has gone back to math homework. Brother A. asks her for pencil and paper. Children take school papers from on top of the refrigerator.

19:25 - 20:00 The family becomes very relaxed and enters into an animated discussion about a number of topick with many family members contributing. Topics include: losing pencils at school, getting hurt crossing the street, and attacks in school bathrooms. At one point Sr. pulls an announcement off the wall to show me. It is about violence in the schools and school rules for Beyer Middle School (Bilingual). He reads me a passage from it. A. is tracing a cartoon character off Pee Chee folder. One of the younger girls

is writing on an envelope, leaning against the refrigerator, listening to the conversation.

20:00 I ask E. to come into the kitchen to find out which teachers she has. Otherwise she remained in the back room the whole time.

Some of the notes the field researcher made for himself reveal a great deal about the family he had been observing. Thus for example, confused by the multiple and continuous actions going on in the small house with all ten family members, he exclaims: "TOO MUCH HAPPENING!!" About the father who, in spite of not being literate in English could communicate with some difficulty, he notes that "he is on an advisory committee for Willow Elementary," in spite of the fact that he, the father had only finished the 6th grade in Tijuana. The overall environment of the home and the support towards literacy motivates him to characterize the family: "Family is obviously very concerned about learning and proud of what children already have learned." About Elizabeth, the 14 year old girl, he remarks: "Likes to read mysteries; reads in school; left books and papers at school... English only..." Regarding the conversations going on: "all conversations in Spanish..." Regarding school notices: "Flyer on the refrigerator about parent-teacher conferences. On it are two hand-written notes by one of the parents referring to the days of some meetings."

In analyzing the field notes of this observer it becomes clear a pattern of differential support of parents for children involved in literacy events. Younger children are monitored closely, while older are left to their own responsibilities; women, particularly those between 10 and 12; be highly motivated and do a great deal of homework in the home, i.e., Marilina and

Maria de Jesus; the older females, Elizabeth, Melida e Isabel, have the serious responsibilities of domestic work: cooking, washing dishes, shopping, and weaving the macrame plant holders to pad the family income.

Comparison and Contrast Between Families III and IV

The relationship between literacy and family activities and values was studied using two families living in San Ysidro, California. One family had bilingual members, the other was totally Spanish dominant. The families were observed over a period of three months from March to May, 1982. Each family was observed 4 and a half times. Both families had a female member in the 9th grade attending Southwest Junior High School.

Based on the observation of these two families, some opinions about literacy and the family can be expressed.

1. The parents' desire for literate children may not be supported by a home environment encouraging literacy. While parents want their children to read and write, they themselves may not be models of applying literacy meaningfully to everyday problems. Both families studied were concerned about their children doing homework, including reading and writing Children were provided a place and a time to work, in each case the dining room table. However, the actual use of literacy skills by the parents was quite different. Sr. G. studies newspapers from Tijuana and La Opinion, referring to them in conversation. He types letters and articles to Tijuana newspapers. He has petitioned government agencies for various services for himself and civic groups. Sr. and Sra. C. must deal with school announcements and immigration forms, but basicaly their interaction wtih writing is minimal. For example,

they do not make a shopping list, but rely on a collective discussion while in the store.

2. The parents' respect for literacy is not connected to "unrealistic" occupational aspirations. Both families see that an educatio helps to get a job where one "does not work so hard" compared to farm labor. Being bilingual is considered to be useful for getting a job in San Diego, especially in retail sales. Sr. C. once mentioned his older daughter wanted to be a teacher, but basically the families don't see their children becoming professional.

3. Family responsibilities may have a negative impact on promoting literacy among the older children. In both families, older children take on duties that cut into free time that might be used for reading and writing. The oldest daughter in the C. family, Susan handles all the jobs of the female head of the household--cooking, shopping, and cleaning. She must also care for her baby. The target student also helps, but responsibility falls on the eldest. Susan dropped out of high school, and while she thinks education is important, sees no real opportunity to graduate. Her observed literacy activities are limited to shopping--i.e., writing the lists.

In the C. family, there is a distinction between the younger (7-12) and older (13-16) group of children. The four youngest children, in the first through seventh grade, spend more time doing school work. The youngest, Evangelina, has more that once brought up a book to her father to have help in reading. On the other hand, the older children spend less time studying schoolwork-- the primary literacy activity. In family discussions, they say little about what they do in school compared to the highly motivated younger

girls, aged 10 and 12. The older children spend more time on household chores--cooking, washing dishes, shopping and weaving the macrame plant holders.

4. Schools play an unexpected role in promoting literacy events. This is most clear in the case of the C. family. Various bilingual announcements from school--permission slips, PTA agendas, discipline rules--are the topic of much conversation. They are posted on the refrigerator and on a wall near the sink. The parents study them, for example, to determine how much money is required to go to a field trip. Sr. G. also deals with such documents, but he has only one child still in school. Also Sr. G. has had his family established in the U.S. for a long time, so he receives a much broader variety of materials.

5. Literacy can be the by-product of an activity the adolescent finds important. Jackie, the target student of the G. family, is below grade level in her ability to read and write English. However, she uses reading and writing skills outside of school extensively. Jackie has a two-fold interest--her religion and a concern for the condition Chicano teenagers. Jackie belongs to the Victory Chapel in National City, an evangelical church. She says she began reading the Bible at age 13 and became serious about reading it at 14. While she will read mystery novels at school, her main reading material at home is the Bible. She has been observed reading it. Jackie is concerned about the violence, frustration, and prejudice that her peers and family face. She currently feels that this problem can be alleviated by "turning to Christ." She found two works on this topic, "A Cholo's Life" and "The boys of our town have joined in gangs," that she likes to copy out and pass to

friends. "A Cholo's Life" seems to be her original work, while the other was apparently copied from a magazine. Jackie is so motivated that she volunteered to present "The boys of our town have joined in gangs" at a high school MECHA conference even though she is basically shy and not prone to speak out.

6. Literacy is viewed as a practical skill, not as creative expression. Sr. G. was more vocal on this point, but Sr. C. would agree. According to G., literacy helps the poor, or workers, to survive. They can understand what the rich are doing to them. Writing can be a tool to helf workers get better conditions through petitions, letters, and articles. Mr. G., the father in Family III, was an early organizer for the UFW, so he has seen the practical value of literacy. In no case, in either family, was anyone seen writing "without purpose" to express personal feeling.

Some relationships between family life and literacy have been noted. However, this writer is resistant to label the relationships "positive" or "negative" without longer study. For example, one would think the limited literacy activities of Family IV would have a negative influence in the children. In fact, two of the girls appear to be excellent students. Jackie on the other hand, is a below average student, but comes from a household with many literacy events and she possesses strong internal motivation to improve literacy skills. Conclusive answers can only be found in a study that follows these children into adulthood to be functionally literate in Spanish. Spanish is the only language used in the home, and no interactions with outsiders were observed where anyone had to resort to English. All television viewing is on Mexican channels. The children show no sign of adpting to the Chicano/"Cholo" culture of the area. Their dress and behavior paterns remain Mexican.

Family IV lives in a 3-room trailer in San Ysidro. The family recently moved to the U.S. from Tijuana and were enrolled in American schools in the Fall of 1981, their first extensive exposure to English. The target child is E., aged 14, a ninth grader at Southwest Junior High. All interaction among family members and with the observer is in Spanish.

Parents' Perspectives

The study of literacy events in the houses and other non-school settings deeply affects and determines the literacy skills and academic success of students. When parents themselves are not literate in English, they may still become a strong support of their children in literacy activities. The case studies and the summary of the forms, functions and values of literacy seem to suggest that the family, as a social unit, plays a crucial role in the acquisition of literacy skills. But parents must learn how to be of support in the acquisition of these skills.

Consistent with our theoretical orientation throughout this study, we contend that the learning process followed by parents is better understood if approached from a Vygotskian perspective. Here are some theoretical considerations guiding our study, as it was summarized recently by Griffin, Newman and Cole:

> Vygotsky's notion of a zone of proximal development (ZOPD) refers to a collaborative effort, where a more capable partner works of a problem with someone else who could not work on the problem effectively alone. The situation to which the concept has been most often applied is a psychological test of mental ability. Here Vygotsky defined the ZOPD as the difference between the level of problem difficulty that the child could engage in independently and the level that could be accomplished with adult help (1982:).

The implication of this notion is that the learner (in this case, the parent who has recently come to the U.S. or is otherwise alien to the school system) must establish a special working dyadic relationship with the more able parent, the expert. The reason for this relationship is that Vygotsky's theory assumes that higher psychological functions have a social origin. As Griffin et al. state it:

> ...not only what is carried out between participants, but how they carry it out appears subsequently as the independent function of the novice. That is, the interaction between the expert and the novice is internalized by the novice (198x:).

The forms and functions of literacy are not only as a final outcome of some school activities, but as a process of learning to communicate through text with new and nultiple institutions of a social system. Communicative processes are intimately related to the social skills and basic understanding of how this country operates via its educational, religious, political, and social institutions; and therefore, these processes are related to knowledge the expected roles, appropriate behaviors, and the meaning of the messages exchanged through text, all of which are painfully learned in and out of school. If literacy in American society is improtant for all, for the minority family it is a matter of survival. Educational institutions have a much greater impact in ethnolinguistic minority students' families, because they bring to these families a new social system: a new set of norms, values, reward system, culture, beliefs and, ultimately, badly needed skills to deal with this new system.

To our knowledge, no study has focused on the students' and parents' role vis-a-vis the process of becoming socially and academically competent to communicate through writing. Is parents' social literacy a factor in the acquisition of other literacies required in school? And if parents play a role, how do parents who arrived from other countries learn to interact effectively with the schools in the U.S.? This question can be answered, to some extent, from the data presented above. The very fact that we studied the community ethnographically indicates that we see the families as social units with great potential impact on the academic performance of children.

Poor performance in communication through text English on the part of ethnic students can have several explanations. Writing skill levels (in general, academic performance) and membership in certain socio-economic groups seems to be highly correlated. Learning to communicate through text is a process that requires the acquisition of many and complex cognitive, social and cultural skills. Motivation to write seems to be linked with the reward system embedded in the communicative process, i.e., the success to decipher and/or interpret and generate messages for specific audiences and specific purposes. All of the above would indicate that the teaching of writing in school scratches only the surface of the communicative process, through text, and in fact, presupposes a life experience in a society: knowledge of the issues, the audiences, the roles and expectations of writer and audiences, and, most of all, an overall understanding and internalization of the social system in which we live. The assumption that ethnic children have the presupposed life experience is unwarranted, we all know; but to understand understand how this experience is painfully acquired by the ethnic families can help a great deal to reform our educational programs.

It is precisely through social interaction that parents learn what is expected from them in the schools, and how can they, in fact, become effective supporters in their children's education. What do parents need to learn and how do they learn it? Is the conceptual structure, the organized system they bring to this country reorganized, and in what ways? In an attempt to respond to these questions we have decided to look into the organizational structure of parents' interaction during the Cafes de Amistad. We certainly do not have all the answers, but we feel we are beginning to understand better the process of socialization, at least in some of its phases.

These researchers' encounter with parents was first made in the school grounds and it became the beginning of a new momentum to the parents' organization. The veteran in the organization, still functioning as its President, was a man in his seventies, monolingual in Spanish, and extremely perceptive. He demonstrated a capacity to control the moves of the principal and of the parents even if he was (and is) a monolingual Spanish speaking Mexican who has become a permanent resident in the United States, whose numerous children and grandchildren are United States born citizens.

The "Cafes" were an offshoot of the Parents' Committee and School Site Council required under the Lau guidelines, i.e., parents of language minority students who are Limited English Proficient. Both the parents and students form a group distinct from their counterpart at the school. They are predominantly Spanish speaking and conduct the meetings entirely in Spanish with the community aide translating to, and from, English, for the Principal.

As members of the School Site Council and Lau Committee, these parents undertake tasks directed to the allocation of resources provided by federal and state agencies for academic activities. They make decisions on whether or not to provide additional hours to the community aide, or to fund a particular in-service program or to send a parent representative to a conference.

The first Cafe was held at the home of Mr. Lopez (a fictitious name). About 25 persons attended, including three representatives from the Center for Ethnographic Research. As the meetings began, one of the co-principal investigators in the project was asked by Mr. Lopez to make a presentation. While this event took him by surprise, it did give him a chance, once again, to state the purpose of our project and to emphasize the types of concerns about ethnolinguistic minority students which gave rise to the project, most specifically, the low level of academic achievement in southern California students of Hispanic descent. Also stressed was the important role parents can play in helping their children succeed in school, for example, by:

1. Taking a more active role in the children's school work
2. Maintaining contact with teachers
3. Obtaining special resources to assist children with school work when they lag behind
4. Allowing children to express their opinions and make their choices.

These topics were presented to the group for discussion and followed by a lengthy exchange of opinions. Several topics that would appear in the following cafes were brought up at this first meeting. Parents consistently expressed genuine concern for their childrer's performance in school. They wanted their children to be given the opportunity of learning English as

quickly as possible. School was perceived as an unknown quantity; that is, parents placed a great deal of trust in school, and yet they were hesitant, almost fearful, to trust it completely. They wanted to know more about the school and systems behind it, but they were not quite sure how to go about the task. Parents wanted to understand the U.S. educational systems by comparing the Mexican schools with those in the U.S. They appeared to hold the former in higher regard because their children were achieving at higher levels in Mexico. This topic was of such interest that a suggestion was made that the whole group pay a visit to several schools in Tijuana and verify the hypothesized superiority of those schools. These topics broached in the first Cafe came to be actively pursued in subsequent Cafes.

Mr. Lopez showed his skill and power in controlling the group, redefining the rules of interaction and reinterpreting the experiences parents had described a few minutes earlier. He did it in Spanish and demanded step by step translation into English for the Principal of the school (who began to feel a bit neglected). The message Mr. Lopez was sending to all of us was one of caution, political wisdom, and restraint vis-a-vis other guests (particularly the Principal), as well as a call for intra-group discipline, self- control and a recognition of Mr. Lopez' own role. Mr. Lopez made the meeting highly structured: pending agenda items were covered, word was granted orderly, and spontaneity was curtailed. A number of informal means of control were used. The translator, i.e., the community liaison person, paid by the school, would whisper in either language brief messages from, or to, some of the parents who wanted to reopen the discussion of controversial issues. She was also either reinforcing, on the be half of Mr. Lopez, the rules of appropriate interaction vis-a-vis the presence of the Principal and other

guests, or interpreting school policies of behalf of the Principal.

The overall tone of the concluding remarks by Mr. Lopez and interaction among parents was conciliatory and complimentary to the principal for being "so sensitive" to the needs of Mexican/Hispanic parents. A final kind, and selling pitch from the Principal was translated by the liaison person in a tone that appeared to be patronizing or condescending. Nevertheless, parents felt satisfied because they had been together as a group and had been given recognition; they felt they had some "power" as a group. The principal and liaison person were also happy because parents had been kept under control by Mr. Lopez, and the whole affair had turned out positive and constructive. What next? The issue was not it, but when and where, to get together next?

The second Cafe was held at the home of a young, active mother Mrs., Chavez, who has a daughter in the ninth grade; a relatively newcomer to the area (two or three years ago they moved from Tijuana), the mother is a very active member of the Lau committee. She is the most "liberated" of the mothers, openly expressing support for increasing freedom to children in their choices of academic activities, and relating how she applies her belief at home in the upbringing of her daughter who wants to be a lawyer. Mrs. Chavez had advanced schooling in Mexico, and comes from a middle class background. She grew up in an atmosphere highly supportive of her academic endeavors.

This second meeting was attended by the District Superintendant and a member of the School Board. Mr. Lopez was the principal speaker. His major concern was with the lack of information available about the vocational program at the Del Rey High School and at the Southwest Junior High School. Parents were not sure what classes were suited for college education.

Apparently there was no available information in Spanish. The superintendent asked the principal to make sure that such information was made available to parents. "Why are our children taking classes such as 'Office or Library Helper' when they had originally signed up for hard core subjects? How could we communicate our felings to the counselors?" Parents felt hopeless and afraid to talk to the counselor. In their opinion, the adjustment of rosters to balance class loads is done at the expense of their children and other ethnic students precisely because ethnic parents are less knowledgeable about academic options and their consequences, and, therefore, less likely to complain.

The meeting concluded with a brief statement by the Superintendent expressing his thanks for the invitation and his admiration for the interest taken by parents in the education of their children.

The following cafe de amistad scheduled by the liaison person for the following month at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Lara. The Lara's are parents of four, in their forties, monolingual in Spanish. They arrived in Chula Vista about two or three years ago from Tijuana were Mrs. Lara was an elementary education teacher, and, later on, a parent involved in in-school activities. She had been conspicuously frustrated by what she perceived as a lack of commitment of some parents to attend meetings. She had a notion of what she wanted to accomplish with or without the blessings of Mr. Lopez, the President of the council and re-organizer of the cafes. For this meeting, the guest speaker, who would also fall into the trap of miscalculating Mr. Lopez' control and political skills, was a bilingual teacher, a likeable and dynamic young Mexican-American in charge of Physical Education and Mathematics.

Mrs. Lara met every guest at the door and greeted them by pinning on them a "distintivo", a sort of a badge "cafe de amistad" to mark the occasion. This was an acceptable way of using a traditional Mexican gesture in order to foster solidarity. Rather abrubtly and without permission from Mr. Lopez she asked, "Are we the Parents Teachers Association (PTA)?" "Why aren't more parents involved?" "What is the purpose of this group?" Several members joined in the discussion. Most addressed Mrs. Lara's first question. They explained that the PTA is a more formal arrangement between parents and teachers, whose activities are geared toward social events and raising funds for support of extracurricular student activities. In essence, the explanation was that the goals of the group are different, with this group being most active and most interested in areas related to children who are Spanish dominant. Mr. Lopez spoke to the second general question by recapitulating the beginning of the Cafes de Amistad four years ago with a group of parents who sought to demonstrate to the school that indeed parents were interested in their children's education.

For a minute Mrs. Lara's abrupt start with a question that would challenge the very existence of a group functioning during the last seven years under the direction the the respected Mr. Lopez, sitting down as a guest right there, seemed highly inappropriate to some parents, particularly because Mrs. Lara was the hostess and had no recognized status of leadership in the group. The easiest response was to ignore the issue behind the question (the issue of commitment, determination and guts in pursuing the interests of parents as a group in school) and to respond to the surface aspects: The answer: "No, we are not the PTA." "We are here because we have been historically organized in

this fashion for the last seven years and it has been useful. No, we have no illusions of control or of creating a strong political group. We are here to show friendship and to exchange information."

Mrs. Lara's question meant to start a serious, gut level discussion on the futility of efforts like these if all they accomplish is to cater to the school personnel and do not permit parents a true partnership in decision making processes and the power to help the principal in the management of the school. For a while there was shock and confusion, particularly on the part of the principal, the liaision person and Mr. Lopez, and their supporters. The tone and volume of Mrs. Lara's voice was intimidating. When her husband tried to speak and ventilate other issues, she vigorously quieted him down in order to pursue the fundamental issue with which she had started: "o somos o no somos" "are, or are we not committed" to what we say we want.

The second half of the meeting involved a discussion with the guest speaker, i.e., the teacher who had arrived late because he was receiving an award recognizing him as an exemplary teacher. As an ESL, Math and Physical Education (PE) teacher, as well as a student advisor, he is well known and liked by parents and students. With the approval of Mr. Lopez, the teacher was introduced by the principal, who also announced the awards; parents applauded. The teacher then gave a brief talk on his role as a Math and PE teacher, and the importance of continued parental involvement.

At this point, the hostess noted that we had been meeting for about two and a half hours and asked everyone to step into the dining kitchen for coffee and snacks. The meeting was concluded with friendly remarks between snacks and drinking of punch and coffee. It was arranged that the next meeting would

take place in the house of the field coordinator.

The Cafe at the house of our field coordinator was meant to attract teachers, parents, co-rearchers (M.A. students doing home observations and/or implementing the "new" writing modules for writing instruction). Parents' attendance was slightly down and the entire atmosphere was more relaxed, less controversy oriented, less focused on performance and public participation. As a result some of the parents (those who never miss a meeting) had the chance to pursue in a less politicized environment, the issues they had been raising all along. The researchers had hoped to present to all attendants a brief up-to-date report of the research findings, and then open up for questions. Thus, for example, Mrs. Lara renewed in a reconciling tone, her concern for making the Cafes de Amistad more action oriented.

The discussion ended up centering around the poor counseling given to ethnic children. One mother was whispering to another "No te fies del consejero" "don't trust the counselor". Others would refuse to believe specific instances of unfair treatment or negligence by counselors.

There was a brief discussion on the Cholo high school student and the misleading stereotypes about Cholos: often Cholo looking kids are good students, intelligent, capable and productive.

Parents' divided opinion on the effectiveness of bilingual education surfaced in the context of preventing the academic failure of Mexican or Mexican-American children. Because the interaction was less structured, various topics would appear or reappear in different subgroups. On the one hand, Mr. Lopez had not come to this meeting (he was very ill), and no one had his

credibility or skill to structure the meeting. On the other hand, the space and amplitude of the house lent itself perhaps to fragmentation of subgroups after the initial formal presentation. Story after story illustrated the need of parents to know how to interact with school personnel on behalf of their children. If one would take inventory and rank the topics discussed that night (ranking on the basis of time and visible involvement of participants) the following can be listed:

1. Parents must organize and speak out for their children's needs in schools.
2. Parents must be aware of the intrinsic problems and liabilities of the transition their children go through from Mexico's to the U.S. schools.
3. One of these liabilities is the lack of credibility of their children, particularly vis-a-vis racist or negligent counselors.
4. Parents must help each other in an effort to learn how to deal with the U.S. schools.
5. Parents must get information regarding academic programs and assistance available and helpful in opening college opportunities for their children.
6. Parents' cultural and linguistic heritage is most valuable and not in the way of the academic achievement of their children.

Parents find themselves at different points of the acculturation continuum. Some have just begun the threatening and unending process of reinterpreting reality, values, roles, and life experiences, surrounded completely by a new set of cultural, social, educational and political institutions. Those parents who feel the greatest need for understanding the U.S. school system, and the new world around, particularly if they are motivated to learn how to deal effectively with the schools, seem to profit the most from the Cafes. They were the first to develop a dyadic relationship with one other parent who would become their coach, helper, interpreter and friend.

The coaching process is one in which a more knowledgeable parent, the "expert," the coach, walks step by step the long journey of social literacy with a "newly arrived" or less skillful parent. Both parents come together to the Cafes de Amistad. The coach, or "expert" cues the other parent to share her/his problems, to give testimony of gratitude for the solution obtained through the action of the expert, and to reinforce the will of learning more, and how to deal effectively with the system. Ultimately, the parents' capacity to make sense of the school's communication through text, and often of all communication through text, including texts coming from other institutions than school) is through the intervention, advice and guidance of the coach. Normally the expert is bilingual while the learning parent is monolingual in Spanish. The most crucial function of the expert parent is to help learning parents expand their zone of proximal development. The learning parent would internalize tasks, principles and social etiquette in order to deal effectively with school personnel.

There is another important function that the Cafes have. In a number of intangible ways, Mexican parents share with each other and demonstrate their affection and commitment for their "country of origin." The reinforcement of cultural identity provides an opportunity to the learning parents (recent comers) to return the favor and teach their coaches how, in fact, the language is used, how cultural celebrations are carried on, and how the current reality of Mexico as an industrial country should make all parents proud.

The school continues to be perceived by parents as the single most important agent of change at home. The schools, through the education of the children, opens up for examination, new realities, new vistas and challenges. Unfortunately, school may also bring out the sad and depressing experience of racism, at times in trivial but hurtful ways. In one word, the school paves the way to literacy by making demands, establishing policies, communicating through text, and by bringing to the newcomer's home a whole new set of values dependent on the ability to understand and generate text.

Parents perceive the acquisition of literacy skills as a matter of survival, as a major enterprise in their lifetime and that of their children. Thus failure to acquire literacy in English or to achieve academically on the part of their children affects profoundly the morale of the Mexican and Chicano parents, their self-perception, their confidence in dealing with the world around and their overall adjustment to the U.S. Parents who are illiterate in English seem to struggle continuously to lose control of their lives and their futures, and to depend on other persons who are fully literate in English.

III. Classroom Component: The Implementation of Writing Activities

Introduction

This section of the report presents the classroom component of the investigation. In keeping with our contractual obligations, the research reported here provides maximum information about the procedures utilized for turning community ethnographic data into usable information for classroom practice.

Our basic strategy centered around the development and implementation of a series of writing "modules." These modules consisted of writing activities designed to bring understandings from the community into the organization of writing instruction in the classroom. A concomitant aim of these modules was to produce observable change in the students' writing within a relatively short period of time. To accomplish these twin goals, we recruited a dozen teachers from three secondary schools in the community to participate in the project. These teachers' efforts to improve the writing of their students form the basis of the classroom component described herein.

We will start this section by reviewing studies that intervened in classrooms on the basis of community ethnographic information. This review will help the reader contrast the procedures used in these studies to integrate community and classroom data to the one's employed in the present investigation. Following this review, we turn to the present study. We first discuss the theoretical ideas that guided our efforts, in particular our adaptation of Vygotsky's (1978) ideas on learning and development to organize the writing modules. These notions, as we shall discuss, influenced the formulation of the research problem and shaped our research procedures. We then present the design of the study. Here we emphasize our collaboration with teachers in developing and conducting the research.

With the above as preface, we devote the bulk of this section to detailing the writing activities. This includes a discussion of ethnographic findings that influenced the conduct of the study, descriptions of research meetings with teachers and of how writing activities were implemented, samples of student writings and a summative evaluation of the effectiveness of the interventions. We conclude with a discussion of the role of ethnography in informing classroom practice.

Review of studies

This review is about studies that reorganized classroom lessons on the basis of home and community data. These studies are the Kamehameha Early Education Project (KEEP) in Hawaii and two studies by Shirley Brice Heath based on her ethnographic work in the Carolinas. As Cazden (1983) points out, these studies are among the few that have gone beyond the "status quo;" i.e., studies where the researchers not only describe and analyze existing conditions and suggest changes (e.g., Philips, 1972; Erickson and Mohatt, 1982), but collaborate with teachers in producing change. [1] All three studies involved ethnographic observations, but the way this information entered the classroom differed. These differences are examined below.

KEEP. This work started as an interdisciplinary attempt to improve the education of native Hawaiian children by establishing an experimental or model school to explore new methods for teaching these children. As such, KEEP represents a series of related studies conducted in the same setting with the

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1. We are aware, of course, of the on-going work of Richard Morris and his collaborators in Philadelphia (Morris & Louis, 1982). As of this writing, however, reports of this work are unavailable for review.

same goal: to increase the school achievement of Hawaiian children. Much of the work has focused on improving reading lessons. The results of these interventions have been reported in detail elsewhere (Au, 1980; Au and Jordan, 1981; Tharp, 1982). Briefly stated, changes in the conduct of reading lessons produced dramatic increases in the children's test scores.

The KEEP reading program has several specific features that may have contributed to its success (Au, 1980; Tharp, 1982). Two aspects of the program are particularly important for our discussion. One is a shift in the focus of instruction from decoding to comprehension and another is the inclusion of the children's experiences as part of the lesson's reading discussions. Combined, these two elements facilitated comprehension by making the children's experiences relevant to their understanding of the reading content. Au's (1980) close examination of the reading lessons reveals that the integration of experience and comprehension was helped by the native Hawaiian teachers allowing, as part of the lessons' discussion, ways of interacting intuitively comfortable for them and for the students. These ways of interacting contained structural properties very similar to a native Hawaiian speech event, documented in the ethnographic literature, the so-called "talk story." These new lessons differed from routine lesson interactions in that they not only elicited individual participation as nominated by the teacher, but also permitted mutual or joint participation by the students in discussions of the text. Thus, ethnographic information about a specific speech event in the community was used to interpret a key aspect of the lesson changes. It does not seem that community information was transported into the classroom to modify lessons; instead the lessons were transformed first and then the community data were used to make sense of what was it about the new reading experience that

had an effect.

Other lesson interventions were also implemented for pedagogical reasons not necessarily related to any specific cultural or ethnographic factor. One relates to the classroom contingencies of reinforcement. The teachers purposely created a reinforcing classroom environment by using abundant praise, and avoided establishing aversive learning conditions by using very little punishment. Praise was contingent on good academic work and helpful conduct. In particular, "on task" academic behaviors were highly valued. A second intervention organized lessons into a small group format to emphasize cooperation and mutuality in classroom work. Jordan and Tharp (n.d.) point out that the cooperative orientation of the lessons was implemented on the basis of good pedagogical practice and without regard to any specific cultural issue, but that these practices were culturally "validated" and elaborated through community observations. As such, lesson changes that started out as classroom-specific turned out to be also culturally relevant.

Cazden (1983), citing Jordan's (n.d.) analysis, examined the contributions of ethnography to the KEEP design. The direct application of ethnographic information to modify classroom practices seems to have been rare. Instead the ethnographers contributed a cultural interpretation of the pedagogical interventions. As Cazden puts it, the ethnographers' primary role was "agreeing on a particular plan of action for cultural reasons while psychologist and educators agreed to the same actions on other grounds." A key to the success of the project, Cazden concluded, was the collaboration of ethnographers and practitioners in developing and conducting the research and in their joint contributions to program design.

In linking classroom activities to community data, then, KEEP took the following path:

1) Classroom lessons were changed according to sound teaching practices; these practices included emphasizing reading comprehension (as opposed to decoding) and creating contexts for discussion in which the students could relate their experiences to what they were reading. These lesson manipulations were in turn associated with increases in learning, as reflected in improvements on standardized test scores.

2) In implementing pedagogical changes, the native Hawaiian teachers organized lesson discussions that were comfortable for them and their students (e.g., the use of talk-story in lesson contexts). These changes were characterized by a mutual adaptability on the part of teachers and students in creating new lesson conditions.

3) The ethnographic literature was used to establish a correspondence between the new lesson arrangements and a prominent sociolinguistic events in the community, such as the "talk-story."

4) Once this link was established, the community information was used to formalize an interpretation of why the lessons were working and to further capitalize on the ethnographic data to make changes in other areas of the curriculum.

The specific processes by which the KEEP researchers made the community-classroom link may differ somewhat from our characterization, but it is clear that the starting point was the manipulation of lessons according to state-

of-the-art teaching practices. In addition, these lesson manipulations needed to produce an obvious change in student performance, otherwise why spend time documenting their cultural appropriateness? Thus, the community information was initially and, it seems, primarily used to interpret the classroom changes and to guide further interventions.

Shirley Brice-Heath. Here we will review two studies which, in contrast to the large-scale interdisciplinary effort that produced KEEP, represent the more traditional ethnographic approach of an individual conducting long-term participant observations in the same community. The work is rich in detail; however, we will limit our discussion to a summary of the results most relevant to the present study and concentrate on depicting how the researcher used community information to modify classroom practice. We will first review Brice-Heath's study with pre-school children and parents, and then examine a study that closely resembles our present study on adoloescent's literacy behaviors in the community and the classroom interventions made on the basis of those observations.

The first study (Brice-Heath, 1982) evolved out of her work in colleges and institutions in the community. The study was motivated by the concern of parents in the Black community that their children were doing poorly in school. In particular, the parents were concerned about the lack of meaningful communication between their children and the teachers. The teachers, in turn, complained that the children were uninvolved with the curriculum and would not respond even to the simplest questions. These concerns, as well as the researcher's previous work on language acquisition and use, helped establish the direction of the study. Brice-Heath analyzed how adults talk to

children in home and community settings and the children's responses, and compared these verbal strategies to the functions of language in the classroom. Specifically, the study concentrated on the different roles of questioning in Black, lower-class homes and in the homes of White, middle-class teachers. Both groups had pre-school age children at home.

Results indicated that the teachers depended heavily on questions for socializing their children and for engaging them in "conversation." They also used questions to teach the children how to look at books, to label objects, and "to search out pieces of pictures, to name parts of the whole, and to talk about these out of context" (p. 113). In contrast, adults in the Black community were not observed directing many questions at their children. Those questions that were asked served a different function from the interrogatives in the teachers' homes. In the Black homes, questions asked for analogical comparisons that required the children to compare events, objects and persons. The classroom analysis revealed that questions used in the teachers' homes were very similar to those used in the classroom, and that both were different from those used in the homes of Black pre-schoolers. As such, school-type questions were unfamiliar to the Black children; these children had to learn new uses of questions when they entered school. As Brice-Heath notes, the Black children's "communicative competence in responding to questions in their own community had very little positive transfer value to these classrooms" (p. 123). This is important because questions dominate classroom talk, it's the teachers' primary way of transmitting content and skills and of assessing comprehension and progress.

Brice-Heath points out that for Black children to succeed academically they had to learn to use school-like questions. But the "intervention did not have to be one-way; teachers could also learn about the rules for community uses of questions" (p. 124). Concerned with the lack of involvement and advancement of the Black students (cf. Philips, 1972; Erickson and Mohatt, 1982) several (unspecified) teachers agreed to incorporate into classroom lessons some questions used with Black students in non-school settings. The interrogatives used were the ones that "made sense" within the lesson context. That is, those forms of questioning that could be justified in "terms of good pedagogy" (p. 124) were included in the lessons. The interventions increased the children's active participation in the lessons and facilitated practice in using and responding to school-like questions.

Brice-Heath suggests two components necessary to bring uses of language (community data) into the classroom. One is for teachers to become researchers and second is the collection of credible data from both classrooms and community. In doing research on their own families and in classrooms, the teachers explored and discovered "how and why data on everyday behaviors--their own and that of others--can be useful in bringing about attitude and behavior changes" (p. 126). The teachers data collection activities, when combined with data from the community, "led them to ask questions of their own practices and to admit other practices which would not necessarily have emerged otherwise" (p. 127). The lesson interventions were influenced by the ethnography only in so far as the findings were considered pedagogically relevant and useful by the teachers.

The second study (reported in Brice-Heath, 1982b) also emerged from her long-term involvement in the community and as a result of complaints from secondary school teachers about the difficulty of teaching "lower track" children to write. These students aspired to jobs in the local textile mill and found writing irrelevant to their current conditions or for obtaining employment in the future. The purpose of the project was to demonstrate to the students the relevance and importance of writing.

First, the researchers documented the role of writing in the textile mill where most of the boys would seek employment. Interviews and a study of personnel training practies revealed that "no writing was required except a signature on the application blank after it was completed in an interview with a personnel office worker" (p. 40). The job setting turned out not to be a promising setting from which to transfer writing information for use in lessons. The researchers turned next to information about writing in the community. However, ethnographic observations revealed that "adults almost had no situations which called for writing" (p. 41); the writing that did take place within the community was done by older people for record keeping, and to record recipes, religious verses and other sayings. As with the textile mill findings, the community information was not perceived as helpful in increasing the students' classroom writing.

The researchers then turned the boys' own social network. In pool halls, clubs and local gathering places the researchers found various types of writing and for different purposes, ranging from protest messages, to advertisements and announcements. These every-day writing activities served as the base to organize classroom writing lessons. This information was also used to

extend classroom writing. For example, students discussed the writing of others, such as social service agencies, which created problems for them or their parents, and then were asked to review, revise and clarify these documents as part of writing lessons. They also produced a "script" to narrate a videotape they prepared for use in senior citizens' centers, wrote brief spots used in local radio programs, created "ethnographic readers" for students to use in elementary classrooms, and a number of other interesting, innovative activities. In short, when writing was made relevant to their interests and communities, the students wrote. However, Brice-Heath reports that the range of writing practiced in the classrooms was limited by the functions of writing that the students valued. For example, reports of their opinions or events, and accounts about experiences they enjoyed, such as shooting pool, were valued. In contrast to these activities, letter writing or creative writing had limited appeal. Therefore, those writing activities associated specifically with schoolling (e.g., essay writing and creative writing) or with academic work were not practiced frequently.

Note that Brice-Heath used the community information to motivate students to write by making the lessons relevant to student interests, and in so doing, implement procedures to facilitate the students' writing. In contrast to KEEP, which used the community information to establish the cultural congruence of the classroom changes, and in contrast to Brice-Heath's own work with pre-schoolers, where she used specific sociolinguistic behaviors to modify the conduct of lessons, here she used ethnographic data to establish the relevance of writing. Through ethnography the researchers explored social and community settings for information that would make sense to transfer to the classroom for instructional purposes. In addition, as Brice-Heath

reports, the lessons themselves became "ethnographic" in nature: "The approach to turning these students on to writing was based on ethnographic techniques emplyed by teachers and students. This approach enabled students to become writers and translators for their own communities, for an audience of readers whose abilites they knew and could identify precisely" (p. 43).

The studies reviewed above represented different approaches to making ethnographic information useful for classroom practice, but they all have in common the close collaboration between researchers and teachers (see also, Erickson and Mohatt, 1982, and Smith, 1982). The teachers' participation in data collection and in using the data to examine their teaching practices are important elements of the studies. Through their participation in the research, teachers are not simply recipients of research results that may be relevant for their teaching, but collaborators in the development of the research and in exploring how to connect aspects of the students' life with classroom lessons. It is also important to note that each study had available an existing ethnographic data base before the onset of the classroom research. KEEP had the ethnography done in the students' community; it used this information to organize and interpret classroom changes. Brice-Heath had been collecting ethnographic data in her research community before she implemented the classroom studies and capitalized on this previous work in deciding how to proceed. [2] This is not to say that these studies relied only on community information already collected, since further data collection in the classroom

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2. In contrast to these studies, a similar data base was not available for the present study; in fact, to our knowledge, the only ethnographic research in a Latino community comparable to the efforts of Brice-Heath is the on-going work of the Centro de Estudios Puertorriquenos, in New York City (see, e.g., Centro Working Paper #7).

and in the community supplemented the lesson interventions.

Given the local conditions and the goals of the research, each study identified from the community data different information to relate to the classroom, with a particular emphasis on sociolinguistic events which could be transferred for pedagogical use. In the KEEP work and in Brice-Heath's pre-school study this is particularly clear. KEEP refers to the "talk-story" form of some of the interactions that make up the reading lessons and Brice-Heath had the teachers utilize as part of the classroom lessons forms of questioning that resembled the way lower-class Black mothers addressed their young. In Brice-Heath's writing project, however, which was conducted with secondary age students, the community information used in the classroom differed considerably. Lesson procedures were not modified according to any specific sociolinguistic pattern per se. The teachers used community writing events to interest the students in writing and as an object of analysis in their writing. No attempt was reported to rearrange lessons in terms of specific community conversational patterns, but rather, general information about community contexts and events is what proved to be pedagogically useful.

Regardless of the type of community data employed, information imported into the classroom modified the social organization of the lessons. The goal was to change the way lessons were being conducted to increase the children's participation. In KEEP the goal was to improve the students' reading performance by rearranging how they participated in the lessons; in Brice-Heath's pre-school study, the goal was to elicit responses from otherwise uninvolved students to the teachers' questions; in Brice-Heath's writing study, the goal was to get the students to write and in so doing demonstrate the relevance of

writing. In all studies, modes of communication between students and teachers were altered to increase participation, and increased student participation in lessons was then associated with improvements in student performance.

Furthermore, once the lessons were changed, similarities between structural properties of the lessons and sociolinguistic behaviors in non-school contexts were used as evidence of the cultural congruence of the lessons or the cultural relevance of the interventions. KEEP's changes in the lesson interactions and in the implementation of a small group format to encourage cooperation were found to be compatible with Hawaiian cultural norms; similarly, in Brice-Heath's pre-school study, forms of questioning found in the Black community were incorporated into lessons to make them culturally relevant for the Black students. In Brice-Heath's writing study the cultural contact was made by contextualizing the writing in community activities. This contextualization changed the meaning of writing for the students. As Brice-Heath put it, linking writing to community activities made "functional literacy truly function in the social context of (the students) culture" (p. 43).

In addition to establishing the cultural relevance of the interventions, the changes also had to be pedagogically justifiable. It is the combination of cultural relevance and pedagogical utility that made the use of community data in classrooms "credible," to use Brice-Heath's term. As we have observed, changes on pedagogical grounds were the starting point of KEEP's interventions, and Brice-Heath reports that in exploring how to make the community questioning fit into the lessons, the teachers found that "several types of questions used in (the Black community) could be considered what edu-

cation textbooks called 'probing questions'" (p. 124). Probing questions are "questions which followed questions, and questions designed to compare the knowledge of questioner and addresse had about situations" (p. 124). The type of community information the teachers were asked to use as part of their lessons was therefore "justifiable in terms of good pedagogy" (p. 124). If used in the classroom, these types of questions taken from the community data would potentially benefit all students. In Brice-Heath's writing study, the pedagogical utility of the changes became readily apparent when students that were otherwise apathetic to writing instruction, took an interest and started writing in a variety of ways.

With this review as preface, we turn now to a discussion of our study. We will return to the points made here in the concluding section of the report, when we review how we used ethnographic information from the community as part of the writing activities.

Conceptual Framework

In this project we set out to create a system of activities that would help secondary school students to master writing as a tool of communication and thought. Among the many intellectual traditions that we might have drawn upon for this undertaking, we used ethnography, cognitive psychology and educational psychology. Within each of these areas there have been significant advancements in recent years in systematic knowledge relevant to the teaching of writing (see, for example, Whiteman, 1982; Nystrand, 1982; Graves, 1983; Fredericksen & Dominic, 1981; Scollon & Scollon, 1981). Our choices among various lines of thought within each discipline were guided by our search for a synthesizing viewpoint that could meet the very real needs of the secondary

school population in this study.

Central to the approach we adopted is the premise that in order to enhance or modify intellectual skills, such as writing, they must first be understood in their social and cultural context (Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition, 1982; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978). Applied to the problem of writing among secondary school students, this position requires that we consider the contexts and contents of writing relevant to our students' lives. Hence we adopted a position that committed us to looking at the social conditions within which writing occurs in order to know more about how writing activities are put together in the home and community (see section on family case studies). Using these ethnographic observations as a base, we then set about to discover ways in which we could use features of that one context (the community) to assist in another context (the classroom).

Some guiding principles

Our approach builds on the idea that learning how to use important cultural tools, such as writing, is the result of the assimilation of human interactional activity. Vygotsky (1982) expressed this relationship between social activity and individual learning in his general law of cultural development. He proposed that any higher psychological function (e.g., reading and writing) appears "twice or on two planes. First on the social plane and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category and then within the individual child as an intrapsychological category." (p. 57) Children first perform the appropriate behaviors to complete a task (e.g., writing) with someone else's guidance and direction (e.g., the teacher) before they can complete the task competently

and independently. In so doing, children internalize the help they receive from others and eventually come to use the means of guidance initially provided by others to direct their own subsequent problem solving behaviors. Shifts in the control of the task, from the social interactional sphere to individual and independent action, consitute learning.

From this perspective, teaching is concerned with the development of specific activities, and the systems of (inter) actions that make up the activity and are eventually internalized by students and become intellectual actions. Instructional activities should be organized purposely to facilitate the shift from collaborative activity to individual action. Therefore, in the study of any learning activity, the unit of analysis becomes the act or system of acts by which learning is composed (Leont'ev, 1973; Moll & Diaz, 1983; Talyzina, 1978, 1981).

Vygotsky (1978) referred to the contexts organizing the social to individual transformation of thinking as zones of proximal development. He used this term to characterize the difference between the level that a child can engage a task or problem without help or independently (the level of actual development) and a more advanced level that the child can accomplish with help or in collaboration with others (the level of potential development). In an important sense, what a child can accomplish with the help of others reveals his or her future; that is, those problem solving behaviors that with help and practice the child will appropritate eventually and perform without assistance.

Vygotsky's notion of a zone proximal development comes from his view of the special role of learning in intellectual development. He insisted that learning and development should not be viewed as independent phemonena or, for that matter, equated; instead, learning and development should be considered as part of a single, interactive process in which learning is transformed into development, and development produces the foundation for further learning. Vygotsky derived important instructional implications from this obervation. If the goal of instruction is to stretch the child's performace from the actual to the level of potential development (so that he or she is able to perform at that higher level competently and independent of assistance), then instruction should be aimed prospectively, at the level of potential development. Effective instruction should foster new, more advanced learning by providing the necessary support to facilitate the student's performace at the highest level possible and the practice to allow the student to appropriate these behaviors. As Cazden (1980) has noted, in a zone of proximal development, performance appears before competence.

Applied to the study of formal learning environments (e.g., writing lessons), the students entering skills (the level of actual development) as perceived or assessed by the teacher and the instructional materials present for use combine to set the lower boundary of the zone. The kinds of skills that the teacher wants the child to master and the embodiment of those skills in the instructional materials used in a lesson constrain the upper end of the zone (the level of potential development). The way the teacher organizes interactions between children and text to move them from lower to higher levels of the zone is what powers the children's development and is the focus of our attention.

Talyzina (1978, 1981) reminds us that instruction excersises its leading role through the content to be acquired; the substance of the interactions. The content of lessons, however, does not produce its effect directly. It is always mediated through the teacher who distributes tasks and regulates student learning activities. Therefore, the teacher's organization of learning activities that are appropriate in terms of content and student developmental level create the proximal learning conditions. But it is the teacher-student interactions within these conditions which gives instruction its developmental effect.

The complexity of teacher/student roles is apparent because each school subject has its own specific relationship to the child's level of development. The relationship changes as the child goes from one level of achievement to another. In the case of bilingual students these relationship changes may include the shift from one linguistic context to another. The teacher-student inteactions must be adjusted depending of the conditions these relationships create.

Practical applications

What kind of information, then, can teachers' use to create effective zones of proximal development? How should such lessons be organized from this perspective? Recent studies point to the analysis of patterns and characteristics of interactions between children and their teachers or care-givers as an important source of information (see Au & Kawakami, 1983; Dowley, 1979; Laboratory of Comparative Cognition, 1982b; Wertsch, 1981; Zukow, 1981). For example, Elasser and John-Steiner (1977) report a pilot study, influenced by

ideas from Vygotsky and in particular Freire (e.g., 1970), which modified the organization of writing instruction by importing into the lessons information from the students' lifes. The study, which involved adults in a community college, emphasized the role of dialogue between teachers and learners in establishing the conditions for writing as an intellectual and communicative activity. Concepts about writing were explored and elaborated through pre-writing discussions. The program proceeded sequentially to "encourage and guide the unfolding of conceptual knowlege," about writing. Through oral discussions, ideas were examined, information needs of the audience were clarified and immediate feedback provided on the success of the writing and on how to elaborate previous drafts. In short, group interactions clarified and made explicit (and external) the thinking involved in writing.

The authors also emphasize, although they do not provide examples, the use of writing to analyze issues of significance in the lives of the students. It is this relation, they argue, that gives meaning to the activities that make up instruction.

Another application of the notion of a zone of proximal development is our work in bilingual classrooms (Moll and Diaz, 1983). We used ethnographic observations to analyze the social organization of Spanish and English reading lessons and identify factors that contributed to an underestimation of the bilingual children's abilities and to less-than-optimal reading performance. These factors included beliefs about the proper sequence of native to second-language instruction, English reading lessons that did not capitalize on the children's Spanish reading skills, and lessons that addressed low level oral English language problems at the expense of grade-level reading comprehension

in English. Our subsequent classroom interventions used this ethnographic information to create a more effective teaching and learning environment.

We began by using students' more advanced level of reading in Spanish (their native language and language of instruction for the first three grades) as an estimate of their ability to read and comprehend text. That is, we assumed that Spanish reading specified the top of the children's zone of proximal development and set out to see if this same level could be achieved in reading English. English reading lessons as previously implemented primarily addressed oral English language problems and subordinated comprehension to English oral proficiency. The teacher (an English monolingual) used the students' poor oral English skills as an indicator of their English reading comprehension skills and organized most of the lesson to address the oral problem first so that the children could then move on to comprehension. (This is a commonly accepted instructional sequence in bilingual education.) Our reorganization of lessons, however, re-established comprehension as the main goal and provided bilingual support to compensate for the students' poor English language skills. With this bilingual bridge in the lessons, students were able to "read" (comprehend) in English at a grade approximating their Spanish language skills. The reorganization had the effect of raising the English reading level of the students from a first grade to a fourth grade level.

Our conceptual framework influences our research approach in several ways. Rather that studying the students' writing independent of the conditions in which they are asked to write, we study writing within or as a system of activities; that is, we focus on the child-adult classroom interactional

system. Additionally, we study child-adult interactions in relation to the content and objectives of the specific lessons. It is the relationship among the social organization of lessons, content, and the student's entering skill level that creates effective zones of proximal development. Finally, we look for evidence that particular zones (e.g., particular lessons) provide the kinds of interactions that promote learning.

Design of the Study

In accordance with our contractual objectives and our theoretical notions, we organized a teaching/research arrangement that allowed for exploration of how to use community ethnographic data for the improvement of writing instruction under several classroom conditions. Our procedures enabled us to create and implement, in collaboration with teachers, writing activities that attended to both the teachers' and students' writing needs while making contact with the community issues and concerns documented by the field component of the study. As much as possible, we utilized existing school and classroom resources to minimize time and expense, and to avoid disrupting daily classroom routines in any extraordinary way. An essential feature of the design was that flexibility be built in to incorporate information from the community ethnography while other necessary work was being carried out with the teachers who would implement the writing activities. Below we describe specific components of the design and how ethnographic data was incorporated into the classroom writing activities. A second section follows, summarizing the specific kind of ethnographic information that came to be included in the writing activities.

Design components

The research emphasis was on producing change and on systematically documenting the process of how specific classroom conditions were created to facilitate change. Therefore, the key to the implementation of the design was to secure the active involvement of teachers. Although several teachers had expressed interest in the study, their level of participation was uncertain. As a means of linking our research interest to the teacher's need for training and career advancement, we arranged for the Multicultural Education Department of the School of Education at San Diego State University, to give twelve teachers graduate credits for their involvement in the project. Further, the Department awarded the teachers a small stipend to defray most of the cost of enrollment, registering, and so forth. This arrangement not only provided good incentive and remuneration, but helped develop an on-going, positive relationship with the teachers who were to be our research collaborators. This relationship, it should be mentioned, has outlived the project, and promises to continue in a most productive fashion.

The twelve teachers participated in the study in the following ways:

1) Teachers' Seminars. The teachers attended formal class/research seminars held every other week for a semester. Usually, two separate meetings were held, on Wednesdays and Thursdays; the teachers could attend either day, at their convenience. These meetings lasted 2 1/2 - 3 hours each. A few days prior to each meeting an agenda was distributed outlining upcoming activities and issues for consideration, as well as any required readings. All meetings were held at the project's centrally located community office. This same office was used to conduct all the field research activities and housed the

community data being collected.

From the beginning these seminars were intended to become the "theoretical context" (Freire, 1970) in which to discuss the development and implementation of the classroom writing activities. At the seminars we also introduced for discussion information gathered by the ethnographic study of the community. Specific aspects of the field study (e.g., parental attitudes toward schooling) were presented to the teachers and discussed in the context of their classroom practice. These discussions allowed the field staff to learn what community data the teachers found relevant and what information could become relevant for classroom use.

2) Writing modules. Every teacher agreed to implement a minimum of six writing "modules." These modules consisted of a series of relatively well-specified instructional activities intended to facilitate utilization of community ethnographic data in the classroom. As such, these modules were the vehicle for linking the community data with teaching-learning practices. The specifics of each of the six modules and the social factors that influenced their content and organization will be discussed in separate sections below. Each module was structured to take into account the limits and possibilities of individual teachers, subject matter, student characteristics and school constraints. All modules were implemented under regular classroom conditions; they represented instructional innovations by and for the teachers. The modules were "experimental" in that both teachers and students were participating in activities fundamentally different from the type of writing the curriculum offers. The modules were also sequential, in that each module formed part of a series that provided the participants with related experiences of a

connected sort.

3) Observational journals. We sought not only to foster instructional change, but to document teaching practices that make such changes possible. Therefore, a central feature of the design was the collection of data by the teachers in the form of a self-observational journal. These journals provided both researchers and teachers with data on "what happened" in the writing modules and provided the teachers with a running log of their experiences in the project, a way to contrast their thinking and teaching over time. These journal entries, which became an important focus of discussion, were submitted during each Teacher Seminar, treated as regular field notes, and returned with comments on their completeness and usefulness. These descriptions readily became the subject of discussion once the teachers started to rely on each other's experiences for ideas and suggestions. They also represent important data for our analyses, we found ourselves turning repeatedly to what the teachers' wrote as an important source of insight. As we describe the modules in a later section, we will include excerpts from teacher journals to illustrate our points.

4) Classroom observations. Every week that modules were implemented at least two different teachers were observed in action. These observations were conducted by the researchers in charge of conducting the teachers' seminars and were intended to supplement the teachers' observations. As with the teachers' observational journals, these field notes also became an important topic of discussion during the seminars.

It is important to keep in mind the interaction among these different elements of the classroom research component. Figure 1 depicts this interrelationship. The field component is represented by the broken horizontal lines, and the classroom component by numbered boxes representing the Teachers' Seminars and the Writing Modules. These two elements of the classroom component build on each other as the project progressed. The arrows indicate the mutual interactions that characterized the components. Information from the classroom observations also helped determine the nature of the teachers' seminars. Pre- and posttests were administered as part of the design. We based the writing tests on the assessment procedures that the children typically encountered in school. We selected a writing topic from the district's list, administered the test, and assessed the results following district guidelines.

Influential Factors

Several factors influenced the implementation of the design. The majority of these factors resulted from the ethnographic observations conducted in the community, although classroom characteristics are also included. They are as follows:

Diversity. The ethnographic data revealed the diversity that characterizes the community. Several factors (see section on p. 29 for a summary), specially immigration patterns, constantly mold the specific social configuration of the community. This diversity is most evident in the familial organization. Field observations documented the different familial arrangements as families attempt to adjust to the social and economic realities of life in the

community. These arrangements range from the so-called "traditional" families, with clearly demarcated roles and responsibilites for the family members, to families where the father is missing and one of the offsprings must assume the adult role. But perhaps more important for our purposes, family roles and responsibilities were often assigned on the basis of English-language fluency. For example, in families where the children were fluent or near fluent in English, but the parents were Spanish monolingual speakers, the children took responsibility for conducting transactions that involved literacy in English. Although the parents would monitor what went on, the transactions were conducted by the children. Since the children mediated the family's communication with important social institutions (e.g., paying bills or answering school-related queries), they assumed a lot of control and power within the family system usually reserved for adults. Thus the social, economic and linguistic demands of life in the community are usually met with a lot of familial flexibility in adjusting roles and responsibilites as necessary for survival. This community diversity points to the need for instructional flexibility if writing activities are to meet the needs of the local population. (For the opposite viewpoint, see Duenas Gonzalez, 1982.)

Paucity of writing. Another factor that influenced the implementation of the design was the information generated by the community observations regarding the nature and frequency of writing. Findings indicated that, in general, not much writing was taking place. Most of the writing observed in the homes was functional and practical including such things as shopping lists, phone messages, an occasional letter, and for the most part, students' homework assignments and other school-related materials. This writing seemed to be less demanding in several respects than writing required of students in the

classroom. It did not look like a promising base from which to raise classroom writing skills.

Moreover, teachers were concerned that adoption of community writing events in class could prove time consuming and disruptive to classroom routine. We were told that although it would make sense for an elementary school teacher to adapt, let's say, methods for assembling a shopping list as a writing exercise, such a direct transfer of non-school related writing into the secondary school classroom would be dysfunctional given the students' age and the more advanced academic goals at this level. The one exception noted was practice in filling out employment and other types of forms.

What was indeed clear from the home observations was the important role of homework in creating opportunities for family literacy practice. Most of the literacy events observed were organized around homework activities. Also, other school-related materials such as survey notes also prompted many literacy activities in these homes. Homework, however, more that any other factor, set the occassion for literacy to occur; it brought school into the homes.

Values about education. The lack of observable extended writing events in community life notwithstanding, parents and other community members expressed repeteadly their belief in the great value of education and their concerns about the educational tranining of their children and other youths in the community. They viewed the development of writing as an essential element of a good education and of being cultured (bien educado). As documented in the field notes, some families moved to San Diego for the expressed purpose of having their children attend school here. They perceived the children's

chances for an education better in San Diego than in Mexico. So, although not much writing was observed in the homes and other settings, it was clear that writing in particular and literacy in general was valued as an important component of schooling. From the community's point of view, writing and schooling are inseparable and vital for educational and personal advancement.

Social issues. A different aspect of the research problem became clear during initial home visits. Parents, students and others all impressed us with their concern for social issues that permeate community life. Virtually every conversation that began as a discussion of writing would eventually turn to the problems of youth gangs, unemployment, immigration, the need to learn English and so on. Hence, at the outset of the study it became apparent that writing, schooling and social issues are complexly related phenomena. As a result, we were no longer thinking of merely developing writing lessons using the community findings. Instead, the instructional component needed to be organized in relation to the complex social order we were encountering.

Student and teacher characteristics. Our procedures were also influenced by characteristics of the students and teachers that agreed to participate in the study. In general, the students scored among the lowest in tests of achievement or writing competence. This fact caused widespread concern throughout the school district, and is one of the reasons they readily supported the research study.

Not only were the students considered poor writers, but most teachers reported that they had received little or no formal training in the teaching of writing and, for the most part, felt unprepared to teach it. In addition, the majority of the teachers reported that writing instruction was an

infrequent classroom activity. Most classroom writing was in response to tests or homework assignments with the teacher as the primary audience and evaluator. Writing was rarely used as a broader tool of communication--to convey opinions and ideas to others or to oneself, or to analyze and explore the world. This suggested that to succeed we needed to provide the teachers with specific techniques for teaching writing that they could practice, learn, and adapt to various subject areas. So long as writing was subordinated to other curricular demands, there would be few opportunities for instruction in which students and teachers interacted with the information generated by the ethnography.

We also discovered that most teachers were English monolingual speakers and lived outside their teaching community, putting them out of touch with everyday community dynamics. This pointed out the need to familiarize teachers on a regular basis with community issues. The innovation we developed was more than just a matter of providing the teachers with a "bag of tricks" or techniques to teach writing. We organized writing instruction that was responsive to the community dynamics we were uncovering, while also addressing the teachers' training needs and the students' writing problems.

Writing Activities

The Initial Modules

The initial modules organized classroom circumstances to make a connection with the community information. We made the conscious decision, given the parents' overwhelming concerns about their children's education, to teach the kind of expository writing deemed useful for school advancement. We provided the teachers state-of-the-art teaching strategies for systematically implementing writing activities while exploring ways of using the community information to create favorable teaching-learning environments. These strategies included pre-writing discussions to generate and clarify ideas about writing and about the community, the production of drafts, evaluative feedback from teachers and peers, revisions of drafts and final copy. We used current community information provided by the ethnography as motivating themes for writing. Given the lack of extensive writing activities in the community, we chose instead to transfer information from the community for classroom use, rather than any specific writing or sociolinguistic event. We were sufficiently flexible to adjust instruction to the diverse classroom conditions with which we were dealing (i.e., ranging from beginning ESL to English composition). The key to the initial modules was that the teachers and students experienced immediate success in producing writing.

Along with the teaching strategies, we introduced teachers to our theoretical thinking to maximize their understanding of and participation in our research activities. We encouraged the teachers to use theory to shape the design of the writing activities and interpret their teaching efforts.

Throughout the initial modules, we emphasized the following notions:

1. Writing as communication: writing is essentially a communicative activity and should be taught and understood as such.

2. Writing as a tool of analysis: writing activities can be used as a way for the students to explore or examine social, academic and student-relevant issues; otherwise, writing is reduced to a mechanical and trivial (not to mention boring) task for students and teachers.

3. Writing for intellectual development: the higher order goal of classroom writing is the elaboration of thinking; the mechanics of writing should be taught in the service of this goal. These mutually complementary activities should be combined as part of the same framework.

4. Writing performance before competence: teaching involves establishing levels of performance in advance of what the students can do by themselves. These levels are sustained by the way the teacher structures (organizes) help, and this teacher help is eventually appropriated by the students to become part of their writing strategies. A key to successful instruction is establishing conditions (including goals) for writing that are, in a sense, "futuristic," provide guided practice to help students perform under these conditions, and monitor how students move toward performing independently what they can initially only do with help.

This move from outer to self-regulation is reflected in the students' acquisition of the writing process, accompanying changes in the type of help the teachers provide and in the improvement of the writing product. Our evaluation of success was based on evidence for these changes in the student's writing.

In the following pages we review the initial three modules. For each, we first summarize what happened in the Teachers' Seminars, since the modules were a direct outcome of these meetings. We then review the module implementation, citing from teacher journals to illustrate points of interest and provide examples of changes in the writing over this time span. We examine also issues related to the English as a Second Language classes and provide examples of interventions that address the special problems of those students.

Module I

Teachers' Seminar. This was a key session. We oriented the teachers to the nature of the study and provided practical suggestions for the implementation of the first module. We decided that the best way for the teachers to understand the types of writing activities we were asking them to implement in their classrooms was to have them perform the activities, and then discuss the principles (see section on Conceptual Framework) underlying the writing activity they had just experienced. In particular, we emphasized the utility of pre-writing discussions (see, e.g., Applebee, 1981; Graves, 1982) as a vehicle to eventually introduce and implement additional writing activities based on the ethnographic data and the classroom observations. This session concluded with the teachers discussing and then writing about how they would implement a similar activity in their classrooms. This pattern--going from performing or reviewing a concrete activity, to theoretical discussion, to planning a practical classroom application--characterized most of the Teacher Seminars thereafter.

Specifically, the first Teacher Seminar proceeded as follows: To get the teachers writing, we introduced as a topic for writing the pervasive community phenomenon of "low-riders" car clubs. This is a topic about which the students know more about than the teachers, most of whom live outside of their teaching community. These car clubs, perceived often as gangs, is one of the student and community relevant issues identified by the ethnography. For our purposes, we introduced the topic by showing a videotape about a local low-rider club. The teachers' task was two-fold: first, to take notes during the showing of the tape and then to use these notes to describe the events on the

tape in as much detail as possible--a task similar to keeping observational journals in their own classrooms; second, they were to write a brief essay analyzing differences between themselves and the people on the tape.

The purpose of the latter task was to require the teachers to "act" on the information given, i.e., to analyze critically the information and to use writing as the tool of analysis. We also suggested that they write freely, spontaneously, and to disregard editing or grammatical concerns.

Upon the conclusion of a few minutes of "free" writing, we paused to discuss the process and product of the writing. First, the descriptions of the tape were read and analyzed and suggestions were provided for improving the quantity and quality of their notes. Following this, the group read aloud their essays about the tape. Several points of view were introduced and discussed. Some teachers found the exercise easy and wrote several paragraphs without difficulty; others were hesitant to write about a community phenomenon the hardly understood.

The teachers were then instructed to re-write and expand their essays on the basis of the discussion, but this time to write about similarities between themselves and the people on the tape. Once again, they were encouraged to write freely, but this time to use each other as resources for ideas. As expected, the teachers' performance differed. Some who had no difficulty in specifying differences from the "low riders", were at a loss when thinking about what similarities might exist. The group examined how the ideas of the previous discussion were incorporated into the writing and some of the teachers were asked to read to the group what they had written and the thinking underlying their conclusions.

At this point we performed a joint analysis of the procedures we implemented, including a rationale for the use of a socially relevant issue as a theme for writing, characteristics of the lesson, component skills needed to perform competently in the activity, assessment of product and so forth. Conducting these discussions after the teachers engaged in the activity, instead of as preparation prior to the writing, created optimal conditions for discussing how to conduct similar writing activities in their classrooms. The introduction of a community activity or issue to create a context for discussing classroom adaptations was a key device utilized for developing plans and ideas for interventions.

To conclude the first session, we asked the teachers to develop a plan for implementing a similar lesson in their classes. We encouraged them to treat writing as a process that may include several stages such as pre-writing discussions, drafts, revisions, editing, and final composition. We asked them to think of pre-writing discussions as a teacher-student dialogue that would precede all of their subsequent teaching efforts. The teachers reported having used similar techniques before (e.g., brain-storming, small group discussions, exchanges), but not in the teaching of writing. Hence, pre-writing was introduced as a way to involve actively the students in talking about writing and to help guide the thinking involved in writing; as a way in which teachers could identify the knowledge students bring into the classroom, and organize activities that helps them apply that knowledge to the writing process. They were also encouraged to select as a writing theme, an issue relevant to their students and classes. We were usure if one session would suffice to help the teachers use community issues identified by the ethnography to teach writing.

Therefore, we left the inital selection of writing themes up to the teachers' discretion. Finally, the teachers were to observe and document in detail their implementation of writing activities.

Module implementation. Ten of the twelve teachers reported positive results with the use of pre-writing discussions. Among the comments made were: "increased enthusiasm," "no moans from students when they were finally assigned to write," "students who had not written anything all year stayed after class (on their own) to complete the assignment." In general, the use of pre-writing was successful in eliciting writing from the students, a major goal of the initial modules.

As it turned out, however, most of the teachers selected safe school related themes for the students' first writing module (see Table 1, for a complete summary). These themes included "My Worst Grade," "Afternoon vs. Night School Dances," "Detention," "P.E. Requirements," "Open Campus" and "Cafeteria Food," as well as "My Best Friend," "My Favorite Animal" and the timely "Jupiter Effect."

Not surprisingly, the most powerful examples of student writing occurred in the one class that used a community-related theme. In that particular class the teacher aide had been killed just two months earlier; this murder of a person they all knew led the teacher to select "violence" as the writing theme. Rather than describe this module, we will quote at length passages from the teacher's observations. Note how she introduces a pre-writing discussion to organize the students' thinking as she prepares them for writing. (The passages are continuous, several sentences have been omitted for brevity.)

Normally our topics are light, i.e., favorite things to do, what friendship is, and so on. When I wrote "violence" on the board I got some raised eyebrows and students shifting in their seats...

I gave them a dictionary definition of violence and then asked them what came to mind when they thought, violence. These are the responses I initially received: killing, fighting, mugged, drugs, and guns. That was it. It was dead silent as I waited. Uncomfortable students prevailed...

I went back and sat in my chair in the circle. I began recounting the previous week's Chula Vista trailer incident (a shooting in which five people were murdered)... I started to ask them why they thought it happened. Most felt the man just "snapped". There were many suggestions as to why, but that explanation was the prevalent one...

I then asked them if Mrs. P's murder affected them more. She was my adult aide and was killed by her husband (earlier this year). Many of the students knew her on a personal basis. This was a difficult subject for me because she was my dear friend. The kids fell quiet when I brought Maria up. They obviously had been deeply affected by this violence. They began to relax when someone said, "Of course it affected me more, I knew her." What followed was an emotional discussion. It was like they had been waiting for a chance to analyze how this could've happened to someone they actually knew... I then went to the board and said, "Now, after our discussion, what is violence to you?" The following are their responses:

Violence:		
	killing	fear
	fighting	hate
	mugged	sadness
	drugs	bad
	guns	paranoid
		terrified
	revenge	revenge
	stupid	prejudice
	crazy	loneliness
	disappointed	depression
	insane	rejection
	anger	confined
	confusion	
	frightening	
	feelings	
	jealousy	
	depression	

I concluded by asking them to look over our "brainstorming" results to find a common strain. They easily did. I got words like "negative", "out of control", "confusing".

The next day the students wrote. The teacher provided three questions to help them structure their writing. We quote again from the teacher's journal.

They were slow in starting as they were in the discussion. I knew this would be the case due to the powerful emotions involved. I also tried to encourage each student to zero in on the writing problems they had on the (pre-test sample) such as capitalization, proofreading, even paragraph form. At the same time I refreshed their memories by writing on the board some of the key words from our previous day's discussion. The writing began. Many wrote frantically to pour it out.

Below we present examples of the students' writing.

Writing samples. A feature of our design is that it allows us to collect writing samples from students over time. Below are three writing samples collected from two students that illustrate the writing the students produced in the first module. They will be presented consecutively as written. To facilitate contrast we will first present pretest samples obtained from the same students before the modules were implemented, followed by writing produced in Module I.

In collecting the pre-test samples we replicated the usual classroom conditions for assessing writing. The topic "Junk Food," selected from the district's suggested list of topics, was used in all classrooms.

Student A:

There are a variety of reasons why junk food shouldn't be sold on campus. First, junk food is very expensive. Second, junk food is not very nutritious. Also, junk food gives you zits. Furthermore junk food also, gives you cavities. For these reasons junk food shouldn't be sold on campus.

Student B:

Yes, I think schools should be allowed to sell junk food. They don´t have a lot of junk food in the first place. Junk food tastes good and feels you up when your hungry. It really wouldn´t do any good if they stopped selling it. Because they would bring it to school from home. Plus the school gets profit off of it.

Contrast the above writing to what the same children wrote during Module I. Note the increase in amount of text written as well as the improvement in the coherence and organization, not to mention the dramatic content.

Student A:

I think the man in the trailer court shouldn´t have just took out his anger out on innocent people. If he was mad about the dogs barking then he should have shot the dogs or either complained to the man with the dogs. He shouldn´t have just shot out of every direction. I also think that the man should get special care and also be sent to jail for doing such things that he did. Furthermore, I think he really needs help. Finally, I hope he gets the help he needs and goes to jail.

Student B:

I never had a violent life. But one thing did happen, that effected me very bad. A couple years ago, I found out my Uncle and Aunt had a divorce. My Aunt got the kids. Candy and Tammy where their names. My Aunt went into singing Country. She got pretty good, but she wasn´t no Christal Gale. She had a affair with her chauffeur. After it was over she was going to get married to another man. The chauffeur was still in love with her, so he stabbed her. When I found out I flipped. It was so creepy. After a while I asked my cousins how they felt about the whole thing they said they were happy she died cause she had no time for them. The oldest Tammy said, she saw her mom dead on the floor and she started laughing. That has effected me very much. How can her own daughters feel that way. I felt confused about the whole thing. What triggered it was jealousy. The more I think about it the more I´m glad I´m alive and treasure my life.

The inclusion of a pre-writing discussion greatly facilitated the production of text and, in so doing, created many opportunities for the teacher to teach and to encourage further writing. We´ll let the teacher evaluate the

results:

> I was impressed with the results. As I went around and discussed each paper with the students I got interesting statements--I had never questioned them directly -regarding how much easier this topic was to handle regardless of the emotion, seriousness and so on... Virginia, who wrote about a close call in a gang fight stated, "Don't they know it's easier for us to tell how we feel when we've been there?" I gave so many more positive strokes this time around. Most knew their papers were better. I got no "Really?'s" when I pointed out specially good areas...
>
> This was a very successful lesson for me in many ways. I enjoyed the time to really talk with my kids. It also furthered my belief that if what's taught is important in the mind of the learner, much more will truly be learned.

Module 2

Teachers' Seminar. The second group meeting with the teachers, conducted in a fashion similar to the first, featured the first formal presentation (by Stephen Diaz) about the work of the field component. He summarized the goals of the study, methodology and preliminary findings. In particular his talk introduced a number of community issues and concerns that arose out of discussions with parents and students. We suggested again to the teachers, as we would throughout the study, that if students addressed some of these concerns in their writing, it would increase their writing production. Introducing these community-related issues as themes for writing in the classroom is far from being a trivial task. The use of content not specified by the school curriculum in classroom lessons, specially social content, can be quite threatening to both teachers and students. Recognizing the potential problem, we proceeded with caution.

We also presented and discussed the journal notes collected during the implementation of the first module. For the most part, the journal recordings were uneven and sketchy, owing to the teachers' lack of practice in taking notes on their own teaching. We anticipated this difficulty and developed an outline specifying what type of information would be helpful to include (e.g., descriptions of the process of implementation). The teachers were free to deviate from the categories suggested as needed.

In reviewing the observational notes with the teachers, their successful and unusuccessful attempts at modifying the students' writing became an immediate issue for discussion. Some teachers reported that the students were apprehensive, but willing to try out a new task. Other teachers, particularly those with limited English-speaking students (see section on these modules) were concerned that the writing tasks were too complicated for their students; some teachers complained about the time it took to prepare and implementthe module.

In sum, during the second module, the teachers (a) assessed the difficulties experienced in implementing the writing activities, (b) assessed student writing problems, (c) selected practical strategies to overcome the difficulties identified, and (d) were introduced to details of the community study and explored how to combine the system for teaching writing they were learning (i.e., pre-writing, writing, revising, and writing some more) with the content provided by the community observations. The immediate goal was to facilitate active student involvement in the writing activities. As will become evident, the teachers were becoming increasingly confident about their ability to teach writing.

Module implementation. The teacher highlighted here began this module with a prolonged pre-writing discussion (which the teacher called "interchange") about the writing theme, the quality of the school (Do you feel positively or negatively about S.W. Junior High?). The teacher described her implementation as follows:

> I opened by talking, about their approaching graduation. I recalled how most of us had met three years ago and how fast the time had gone. I reminded them of the hundreds of hours they spend in school. I told them after three years at S.W. Junior High they would be able to easily handle the topic.
>
> I distributed paper and books for them to write on. I brought up the idea that their perception of S.W. Junior High depended largely on what experiences they had had there. We started similarly to last time except I had them divide their papers into "Pro" and "Con." I explained these two terms as some weren't sure what they meant. I had them make their lists with no interaction with people around them. After this, I had them exchange with someone else to see what that person had put. They then returned each other's papers and added to their own anything new they had gleaned from the other's paper. We exchanged one more time. I then went to the board and asked for what they had listed under "pro" and "con".

This pre-writing session generated a number of issues to be expanded in writing. But just identifying issues was insufficient, the teacher then made explicit the writing process for the students.

> The next day students prepared to write. We discussed briefly what had gone on the day before. I had them look at their own list then the class composite on the back of their paper. I asked them, after they read the prompt, how they planned to attack the assignment. Most said, "Think of a topic sentence." I said, "There are things you have to do long before that." Most then said they'd jot down ideas. I said there was one other step even before that. Looks of confusion followed that I told them that since the prompt required them to talk a stand either for or against the school, they had to do that first. I explained that including any details which were the opposite of the main stand would weaken the paper. So #1, take a stand, #2, list details (I had them circle the ones they wanted to include from both lists),#3, Form a topic sentence, #4, write a rough draft and #5, let it rest.

The kids did not hesitate. They got busy. I gave them paper for the rough draft and also the final copy. As they worked I walked around and watched. It's amazing how when you circulate the room and get close to the kids how free they feel to ask questions. Here are some of them:

How do you spell opportunities?
provide
complain practically
definitely enthusiasm
trophies
just

Is it cost or costed?
Can I use "thereby" as a transitional?
Do I always have to use first, second, third and so on?

Some of my Spanish speakers had trouble translating from Spanish into English. For example, one student said, "How do you say it when you want to tell your counselor someone broke into your locker?" More comments, "What sounds better here?" "How do I develop what I said here?" "I don't put a comma here do I?" Many questions about punctuation were aired.

The notes presented above indicate how issues of grammar, spelling and punctuation were raised and discussed, not as isolated points, but for the purpose of improving writing as communication, one of the practices we proposed during the Teachers' Seminars. In the next Seminar we used this teacher's experiences to illustrate the relationship between the higher order, intellectual activity of writing and the lower order, mechanical needs; both were being developed in relation to each other.

Writing samples. Pre-writing activities for this module were similar to the previous one, except that the students were encouraged to revise and edit. Note that the students, following the teacher's suggestions, included several reasons and statements in support of their argument.

Student A:

There are a variety of reasons why I think Southwest Junior

High has various negative quality's. First of all, the school is so plain. I think the color should attract people's attention. They should have left it dark brown. Another negative quality of this school is that the guys don't know which girls are right for them, and they don't know how to pick the right from the wrong. Also, there are girls who want to talk to them but the guys think there too high-class, when they should just try and talk. The respect in this school is not very good in the sanitary things like the rest-rooms. They should have the doors fixed. the school spirit in this school is really bad hardly any people dress and they should get things that the students want. In my opinion rumors are the biggest negative quality in this school. The people just say things because it feels good or sounds good. These few reasons are why I think Southwest Junior High has such negative qualities.

Student B:

This school has 'mproved very much in the last 3 years. Mr. Wong has helped out a lot of students to do their best in behaving on campuses. To me Mr. Wong is just about the most understanding person in the office. Except Mrs. Alaver, she understand the reason of students behavior in the Reading Center. She has helped them out in a lot of different ways. The Reading Center has improved students English grades. Another positive thing about Southwest Jr. is that now races are mixed very well. About three years ago there were more than one race than others. So that caused a lot of problems at school. Now the races are getting along pretty well. The reason of why this is true is they have leveled out the races in school. So that makes it also easier to make different friends. I'm going to miss this school when I leave. This school of ours has alot of positive things about it.

Below is the teacher's appraisal of the module. The students' success in writing became extremely reinforcing for the teacher and she shared her own writing process with the students.

This time, the kids seemed to be much more critical of their writing. They tried so hard. I had stressed improvements in development, form, organization and proofreading. I had many thoughtful questions. They spent the entire period writing. Very few were finished at the end of the period. Exciting! At least 7 or 8 kids asked if they could take them home. I almost tingled inside! The few who finished were told to hand in their papers, but that they would be returned after they had let them "rest." I talked to them about the wicked time I was having with this paper. I was writing for (this project), I showed them my rough draft and they gasped. They had so many questions. It seemed to encourage them that I had to go through the process, too.

In her concluding remarks, the teacher observed that her students' enthusiasm for the task continued into the third day. She also included a few reinforcing comments for the researchers.

> The next day, some students still wanted to work on their papers. I went around reading them and continue to answer questions and encourage proof-reading.
>
> I liked how this module went. I tried to plan it so more time would be spent on pre-writing, writing, re-writing and drafting. I tried to encourage more group interaction through the exchanging of papers. If questions are asked, the interest is there. They were excited that they were actually able to write "a whole page." I helped one student who has some real writing problems. She said, "Is that all there is to it?" I think that is quite representative of how kids feel about writing. They are afraid to write and feel very unsure. I feel much of that fear has been caused by teachers who have given writing assignments but without any instruction.
>
> This (project) is teaching me a great deal. I have loads to learn about the teaching of writing. Hopefully, I will be a better teacher because of it.

Our comments on the teacher's journal, regarding her observations about teachers creating a fear of writing in students, indicate our emphasis during the initial modules of establishing the type of classroom conditions that would help connect the writing with the ethnographic findings.

> Yes, (this fear can also result by the teacher creating conditions)that are very aversive to the students, instead of reinforcing, which is why we are so interested in developing ways in which the teachers consciously monitors the types of conditions s/he creates for the students to write. Most students are asked to write only under aversive conditions. That is, when they are being tested or evaluated, having homework that they must complete and so on. Aversive conditions may keep you at work (for a while) but writing becomes hell. If students write primarily to avoid the consequences of not writing, it becomes easy to turn to other things to escape or to avoid writing whenever possible. You, in turn, are creating positive conditions for writing and it shows in your results and in what you report.

Module III

Teachers' seminar. Encouraged by the results of two preceding modules, we added another strategy to the teachers' arsenal to help the students engage in writing. Students could be "hooked" into the writing activities verbally, during the pre-writing discussions prior to the actual writing, or now, with the introduction of "response groups", as they produced the drafts.

Response groups consist of small peer groupings that provide writers with feedback and a sense of audience. These groups offer initial reactions to a first draft, usually asking the writers questions about the content, intent or form of the draft. Thus, the student writer receives audience reaction while engaged in the process of writing, instead of only after submitting writing for teacher evaluation. Considerable practice is needed to conduct these response groups since the students are asked to assume responsibility for helping out with the composing process, a role usually reserved for the teacher. It takes a while before students can be "moved" from dependence on teacher evaluations of their writing to controlling the process of response and revision. Therefore, most of the teachers used this module to introduce and practice this technique.

Module implementation. Approximately half of the teachers implemented the response groups. They liked the idea of distributing the responsibility for making formative comments to the students; it was another important teaching/writing process that the students could eventually appropriate. Some teachers, however, found response groups cumbersome to organize and implement, which we attributed to lack of practice. Several teachers reported that their

students did not know how to respond to initial drafts, beyond making grammatical comments. It is not coincidence that grammatical comments are what students usually receive from the teachers on their own papers. Interestingly enough, this module, intended to clarify the process of revision for the students, clarified for the teachers the limitations of the feedback they routinely provide students. The following summary of one module illustrates what we mean.

> This idea of response groups was really a new one for me. I have had students do read-arounds and proofread each other's papers but the idea of training students to write specific comments was challenging, to say the least.
>
> I began the lesson by writing the words response and evaluations on the board and asking the students what each word meant and how they differed in meaning. Evaluation, they felt, meant grade or grading process, response answering, commenting, suggesting. I next asked them when they received back their grades paragraph what was written on them by the teachers. They answered--a letter grade, comments and grammatical errors circled. I next told them they would have the opportunity to comment or respond to another's paper in class. They were intrigued by this unusual lesson plan so I passed out the first set of xeroxed paragraphs and gave them instructions on what to do.
>
> I asked them to put 3 types of comments:
>
> 1) a specific positive comment or praise.
> 2) a question about something which was unclear.
> 3) circle or indicate grammatical or spelling errors (no more than 5).
>
> We then read over the first paragraphs together. I read it twice out loud.
>
> We discussed possible comments to make in each of the 3 categories and I ask them to do at least one of each type. They were very unsure of themselves on all types of comments except grammatical ones. The lesson took all period.
>
> The following day I had them respond to the 2nd student writing which had many more severe problems. I still offered many suggestions on what type of comments to make as many of the students seemed insecure and unsure about this assignment. That's why many

of the comments may be similar.

I think the students enjoyed the activity. It was a novel experience for them to analyze another student's work.

I felt the work went well, although I feel the process of students to respond well independently will be a slow one. Total time on lesson - 2 days.

On the first writing exercise students picked upon the very common student error of changing subject in a paragraph. Some really do have a problem in recognizing this subject change in their own paragraphs. I was very pleased they discovered this!

ESL Classrooms

Although all of the classrooms that participated in the study have bilingual students, three of the teachers were involved primarily in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes with Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. The language arts program for the LEP students differed across campuses. In two of the school the programs receive adequate federal and state funding. These programs were well staffed and have language specialists, resource teachers and other support staff available. In contrast, the third school had little more than school district funds. The entire program consisted of one teacher and one aide who taught three different levels of ESL with over 30 students per class. Regardless of the program, however, the instructional emphasis was on oral language development. In none of the programs writing formed part of the formal curriculum. In fact, in most cases the students must wait until they "graduate" from ESL before receiving writing lessons.

Since writing is not part of the ESL curriculum, the modules represent the first time some of these students have been asked to write in English. One teacher reported that the only writing she had attempted with her students was the use of a language (grammar) book which assigned an occasional topic

for writing. For another teacher, the pre-writing session she implemented was the first time she had led a class discussion on non-academic subjects with her ESL students. Not surprisingly, during the initial modules the ESL teachers found the students reluctant to participate, specially in the pre-writing discussions. Two teachers said that their students had difficulties with the writing assignment, not understanding instructions or what the task was about. In short, the teachers in ESL classes were unsure how to proceed. The general consensus was that because the students lacked oral English skills they were simply not ready to write at the levels we were requesting.

Below we report on how one teacher used available resources to overcome the students' reluctance and language constraints and facilitate their participation in the module. She combined a reading lesson and an oral presentation to help the students get started writing. Given the students' oral language difficulties, this integration of lessons was difficult, yet quite successful. Her notes reveal some of the details of this module.

First, she capitalized on oral and reading assignment to initiate writing about a student-related experience.

> In talking with Luis and Rosa in yesterday's meeting, it occurred to me that an excellent prompt for my ESL II group would be one about school, that relates closely to their own personal experience, that follows the oral assignment we've worked on for the last few days. After reading a conversation regarding an old man trying to get out of going to a fair with his son, giving lots of excuses, it seemed to me that the students needed practice in giving excuses orally in English, e.g., to teachers, parents, friends, dates, employees, and so on. Since I had already developed the oral vocabulary for the reading selection, it appeared they could handle devising their own original conversation about a personal experience giving and receiving excuses. I was a little apprehensive about them completing the assignment, but in the end, they were very warm to it and laughed and joked as they composed them. They were to be given orally, but they also chose to write them to help them "set"

the conversation, get continuity, and aid them in study for a memorized presentation. I gave them a total of about 40 minutes class time over 2 days to prepare.

The students are very accustomed to oral group work and were fairly work oriented during the time I gave. All were ready on the presentation deadline. They eagerly signed up on the board for order in presenting. then, regrettably, I was absent on Wednesday from class and a substitute heard them. His report was that the students had done well, but I was so anxious to hear them myself, I gave the kids who chose to do a repeat performance extra-credit for presenting the oral conversations again to me today. All but 2 pairs eagerly participated today. The conversations were very good. They included the use of the target words ("would" and "rather") often and had some terrific excuses. The conversations were fairly inventive and the stock excuses from the text were avoided.

I felt terrific with the oral assignment and decided to go ahead with the writing work. After the last presentation, I put a prompt on the board: What was your worst grade on your report card at the semester (since you just have gotten your computer copies yesterday) and why did you get it?

After we read the prompt together aloud, I asked them who they might have to really talk to about this. Answers of: parents, teachers, counselors and friends came up. I told them to imagine they were writing a formal explanation in paragraph form to either a parent or concerned adult (teacher, counselor). I asked them to brainstorm with me on excuses they might give and we listed them on the board (teacher, secretary) in the past tense (as we continue to strive for accuracy there). I had at least 15 excuses from the students.

The teacher emphasized writing for communication by identifying a feasible audience and urging the students to tailor their writing to this audience. But perhaps more impressive is how she capitalized on what the students' had practiced in reading and oral language to extend their writing. Clearly, the skills being developed in one lesson context are applicable to many other situations, but they have to be engineered to transfer. In what follows, the teacher describes how she structured support to assist the students' writing process.

Then I asked them to think of their worst grade and I gave them an example topic sentence on the board: "My worst grade was a "C-" in math last semester for several good reasons." The underlined section is part of the "formula" I asked them to include.

Next, they were asked to fill out the outline form I have taught them to use:

A. topic sentence

Lessons or Examples
1. First, (sentence second)
2. Secondly,
3. Also,
4. Finally,

In guided practice, with them writing and me canvassing the room for problems, the students set to work. No one had difficulty starting except 2 students who I had to prompt with the example topic sentence again (both students are ones who have difficulty getting started in general). During the remaining 15 minutes, I worked in workshop style, helping to spell, form past tense, clarify word choice and so on. The students were asked to finish the outline at home tonight as individual homework.

Writing samples. Include below are three samples in which the students adapt what they have to say to the formula provided by the teacher.

Student A:

My worst grade was a "C" in Math for several good reasons. First, I didn't study for the tests. I thougt it was going to be easy for me, but it really wasn't. Secondly, I didn't do all my homework. I wasted my time doing other things. Also, I didn't like Math at all. I had a hard time to understand it. Finally, I talked too much so I didnt have time to listen and understand the directions. Now I'm felt sorry about it because it is easy to bet a good grade and I even didn't do it.

Student B:

My worst grade was a "D" in math for several good reasons. First, they changed me from _____ math to consumer math and I can't understand that class. Secondly, they teacher didn't explain clearly and he always spoke English and that class was suposed to be bilingual. Also, I didn't understand my homework because I couldn't

understand in class. Finally, the test was too hard for me to understand it. As you can see my worst grade was a "D".

Student C:

My worst grade was a D in science for several good reasons. First, science is the hardest subject I had last year. I didn't have enough English to understand it. Secondy, she used to say it once and never repeat it again. Also I had a few absents so, I lost many grades and I didn't have a chance to study the subjects. Finally, most of the time I was not ready to make the coming tests and I had a lower grade on many of them.

The teacher comments on her students' efforts were positive.

I'm very pleased with the prospect of these paragraphs because I'm being pleasantly surprised at the control my kids have over the language; I didn't expect such facility in vocabulary or in picking up the formula paragraph concept. I always expect a lot out of the students, but I really misjudged their abilities this time. Either way, the assignment is showing me a very positive improvement already in their English abilities since (the pre-test).

To summarize, the ESL teacher first established the writing conditions, which included structured support to help the students participate in the writing activities. As the students wrote, she guided their production and provided help as needed to facilitate their performance. As with the regular modules, the teacher expressed surprise that she had underestimated what the students were capable of doing. And as with the regular classrooms, the stage was set for more advanced writing to occur.

Summary.

In reviewing the initial modules we summarized the writing actities that took place and made explicit the reasons why we proceeded as described. We had several instructional goals to accomplish during the initial modules to facilitate our exploration of how to utilize ethnographic data for teaching writing. We started a series of seminars with teachers followed by the implementation of writing activities in the twelve classrooms participating in the study. The seminars became the time and place were theory, practice and field findings interacted. These seminars also provided the researchers and teachers with the information necessary to evaluate progress and make decisions about the direction of the study. In particular, we introduced the teachers and students to several, new writing experiences that were successful in producing writing. These experiences included the implementation of state-of-the-art writing techniques that the teachers immediately applied to their classrooms, and the use of socially-relevant issues as themes to motivate writing. The success of the initial modules established the necessary classroom conditions for further experimentation during the final three modules.

The Final Modules

The goal of the final modules was to capitalize further on the ethnographic information to extend the teachers' and students' writing activities. An ethnographic finding very important for our purposes was that students' homework assignments created the most frequent opportunities for writing to occur in the homes. With this finding in mind, we set out to purposely structure homework assignments that not only produced literacy-related interactions in the home, but also involved the parents and other community members in the development and conduct of the classroom writing activities. At the same

time, we wanted to retain the main academic goal of the writing modules: to develop the students' expository writing.

We had advanced rapidly in the initial modules. We provided the teachers with ways to think about and teach writing; through the teachers we got the students involved in writing activities that included by now a familiar routine: pre-writing discussions to generate and clarify ideas about a writing theme and composing process, the production of a draft, some sort of evaluative feedback either from teacher or peers, and then revisions of the draft for final copy. We now wanted to provide both teachers and students with more challenging writing activities. In our terms, to create more advanced zones of proximal development by using writing assignment to make more direct contact with the world outside the classroom.

We proposed to the teachers that they implement three interrelated modules. These modules consisted of three diferrent writing assignments that formed part of an integrated writing activity. More specifically, during the fourth module the students would write their opinions of ideas about a specific topic. This type of writing predominated in the initial modules, so we figured it would be a good take-off point. In the fifth module the students would be asked to obtain information from home, community or school sources in order to expand the statements written in the previous module into an "explanatory" piece. The purpose here, as will be described in more detail below, was to have the students branch out and use extracurricular information to enhance their writing. The sixth and final module would have the students use the information gathered previously to persuade someone to adopt their specific point of view.

As in the previous modules, a key element was the selection of writing themes. We wanted each class to hold the theme constant over time so that the students could practice modifying the writing in the service of different goals. We wanted the teachers to make explicit to the students the process by which text can be modified depending on the goals of the writing activity.

Module IV

Teachers' seminar. During the previous modules we had introduced the idea of organizing the teaching of writing proximally, but had postponed formally presenting the Vygotskian idea of a "zone of proximal development" until the teachers had some classroom experiences to which they could refer. As we presented the ideas underlying this notion, we wanted teachers to interpret their experiences retrospectively from this perspective. To clarify the practical use of this theoretical notion, we showed the teachers a series of videotapes gathered in classroom situations (see, Moll et al., 1982; Moll and Diaz, 1982) in which lessons were manipulated along the lines suggested by the theory. We emphasized that it was not a new curriculum that we were suggesting they implement, but a principled way to organize instruction utilizing existing classroom and non-classroom resources available to the teachers. (see Conceptual Framework). To make these ideas more directly relevant to teaching writing, we read excerpts from the teachers' journals that we felt represented instances of createing effective zones. We supplemented our presentation by giving the teachers an article written by Donald Graves (1982) that proposes a similar idea: "stretching" the students' writing by strategically helping them perform tasks in advance of their current level of writing. Combining these

three resources we were able to provide the teachers with numerous examples of what we meant by a zone of proximal development.

In addition to the theoretical discussion, we also updated the field findings. In particular, we discussed how different families used literacy as part of their daily routines and the implications of this information for classroom writing activities. We emphasized both how the creation of text could help the children understand their community and how understanding the community could facilitate the production of text. To these writing activities we now turn.

Module implementation. The module we have chosen to highlight explored if cheating is ever fair or right, and some of the consequences of cheating. Cheating, as the teachers reminded us, is an important issue in school life. The teacher started by telling the students of an experience she had in college in which a student used hidden notes to pass a test and ended up, to the teacher's frustration, getting a better grade than she, who had played it by the rules. She then separated the class into small groups for further discussion of ideas of the pros and cons of cheating. She made sure that the reasons given by each group were being recorded by a student to distribute to others in the class; she then asked one student in each group to summarize the reasons they had generated. This activity produced about seven ideas per student group that could be used for writing. The students spent the rest of the period writing.

Writing samples. The samples included here show that the students incorporated into the writing the ideas discussed in class. Note that both essays reflect the conflict over cheating as a common and often advantageous

practice, but one that is also morally wrong.

Student A:

This is a very controversial question. There are the cheaters and the ones that help the cheater. I must confess I´m of the second ones. My opinion is not very clear, but I must say I think it´s wrong to cheat, because you will never learn, you can get in trouble, etc. However. there are this other people that really can´t get things into their mind, so that is the people I "HELP." I don´t really think I´m helping them, but is the only way the can get a semi-good grade. My opinion is that you should try to learn by yourself and not cheating, but if you really can´t learn, you may cheat at your own risk, knowing that you are not learning. Now, if you cheat only for being lazy, that´s another story. Those people should be really punished, because they have the mental ability to learn it and they don´t do it by lazyness. That is a shame. But not every body can´t make it being intelligent enough, so I think, as I said it before, they should cheat at their own risk.

Student B:

Even though I´ve cheated before I still don´t think its right to cheat. You know you´re not supposed too but since you know that other people are cheating than why not you. But you´ll carry it in your conscience and you´ll telling your self: "how about if I get caught or something." But you won´t realize that its doing a great deal of damage to you and when you grow up and get a job or want to go to college and can´t go because you don´t know how to do it or something than you´ll think back and say I should of studied and not have cheated. Or before you cheat you don´t think that you´ll get caught but once you do than you say: "I shouldn´t have done that or cheated." What´s the use of studying if everyone cheats than its no use studying or trying to learn anything.

Below are the teacher´s comments on the success of the module:

I frankly was surprised at the amount and originality of some of the ideas they came up with. It certainly was much greater than for a single paper. I had to help them much <u>less</u> on the actual paragraph writing--a few kids needed help with topic sentences but most just started in immediately.

An increase in the originality and amount of ideas included in the writing was

the result of a well organized pre-writing discussion. It created conditions that facilitated the joint elaboration of ideas, a practice that easily exceeds what can be produced by a person writing individually, as the teacher observed. We attached importance to a remark the teacher made almost in passing, that she needed to help the children "much less" (her underline) that in previous efforts. This reduction in the amount of teacher help needed is an indication that the students were beginning to learn the writing process and apply it independently --this certainly was not the case when the modules started.

In response to our questions about the function of pre-writing and theme selection, the teacher wrote as follows:

> I have used brainstorming to some extent in the past. However, I have not spent the amount of class time that I am now using. I usually take no more than about 10 minutes in pre-writing. I have been accustomed to listing ideas on the board for the students, some generated by me, some by the students. For example, when I have students unite comparison-contrast essays we list on the board ways in which two stories, films, etc., are similar and different. It helps them to organize their ideas in preparation for writing. On the subject of my topic choices, I have found in the past, and now, the more controversial and relevant I can make the topic, the more willing the students are to unite and write well. Also it seems, and this is just a feeling, the more complicated the assignment is, the better the responses.

Again we find pre-writing used to organize students' and teachers' thinking in preparation for writing. It serves to orient the writing that is to follow and, as such, helps establish the higher order goal that the actual writing addresses. Thus, we can identify, based on the teacher's reports and our observations, at least three functions for pre-writing. One is that it serves an orienting function for the actual writing (clarifies the goal). Second, it helps organize the students' ideas (thinking) about writing, so it

serves a planning function. Third, it allows the students to bring in experiences on which they can build and develop the writing.

For teachers, it gives them an indication of the motivation that specific themes can elicit. Second, it helps her build on the knowledge that the students make public during discussion. Third, it makes public for analysis her own thinking regarding the theme or the writing process. It's a time in which the teacher shape the writing acts (processes) that make up the overall writing activity and that she wants the students to learn.

Module V

Teachers' seminar. As part of our scheme to integrate the final three modules, we asked the teachers to build directly on the previous module and expand the initial statements written by the students into explanations. Explanatory writing, it was argued, calls for greater specificity and inclusion of supportive data. To help the teachers conceptualize the differences between expression and explanation we provided them with materials addressing explanatory writing. The materials we used were developed by Charles Cooper at the University University of California, San Diego. We found his suggestion on how to implement such an activity compatible with our goals.

Therefore, as a module requirement, the teachers had to organize ways ways to access resources outside the classroom for use in developing the students' classroom writing. So, one goal was for the students to use, as systematically as it could be organized, extracurricular information to enhance and advance their thinking about what and how to write. Our motivation for developing this module was the field finding regarding the role of homework as

central to literacy in the homes. With this in mind, we tried to bring family interactions into the classroom writing system as one of the pre-writing steps necessary to complete the assignment.

We also felt that the teachers would benefit from this module's activities, since it provided a lesson-related vehicle for the teachers to use in gaining knowledge about the children and their community, and provided further issues and ideas to bring into lessons as writing content. Although we had time to implement only one such module with the teachers, we emphasized that this was the type of writing activity that could, given the teaching system they were implementing, become a regular feature of writing instruction in their classrooms. They could purposely use homework assignments to provide a regular "link to the external world," in lieu of the ideal--an ongoing ethnography to inform their teaching. But let us turn to the actual event, to what happened in Module V.

Module implementation. We expected this module to be difficult for the participants, given the emphasis on students collecting data from outside sources, but we also were confident that with the practice obtained in previous module implementations, the teachers had a reasonably well developed teaching system to be successful. It turned out we were correct. We quote directly from the teacher's journal:

> This module was really tough to plan! I decided to use the questionnaire or interview format discussed in our last class session. On Monday I discussed with the students once again the subject of cheating. I wrote the prompt on the board--Cheating: is it ever fair or right? I told the students that now I had their opinion on this subject in the first assignment it would be interesting to see what others thought. They came up with the questions included on the cheating questionnaire. We wrote them on the board (20 minutes). I typed all the questions on a ditto master and gave the survey to them Tuesday. Their instructions were to interview two

adults and two students, the fifth person could be either. I mentioned repeatedly the importance of having the respondents explain their answers. The due date was Thursday, beginning of the period. I allowed them 10 minutes in class to complete the first question They seemed eager to try the assignment (20 minutes).

On Thursday, the assignment continued when the students returned with the completed questionnaires. In the excerpts from the teacher's journal that follow, note the emphasis on creating a proximal zone, i.e., on teaching prospectively and the teacher's surprise at the results. This reaction, usually a comment that the students can do more advanced work than expected, is common and reported often in the journals.

Today, in class, I had the students use the information they had gathered. I was really apprehensive about this assignment. I was afraid the skill level required would be too advanced for my students. Was I ever surprised! I first told the students they were going to be involved today in an advanced task for their grade level, using research they had gathered in a report or explanation of their fact gathering. They were impressed by the word "research" and were very industrious and attentive all period. I pointed out to them that they had gathered a great amount of facts. How should we organize these facts into two paragraphs? They all agreed the organization should be Paragraph 1 - adult responses, Paragraph 2 - students responses. I gave them 10 minutes to study the answers people had given them. At the end of that time, I asked them to focus on the adult interviews only. Looking at their adult interviews, they compared the answers the adults gave to question #1 "Is cheating ever right?". Giving them the beginning of a topic sentence, I asked them to group together the answers given by adults to "1, and finish the sentence. I walked around the room, repeating instructions for those who were unclear. After 5 minutes I explained they were to take several more questions from the adults' interviews and summarize the responses.

I repeated similar instructions for Paragraph 2 for students responses. They needed much less help on paragraph 2 and seemed very pleased with their efforts. They used all of class to finish their short essays.

Once again, as I said before, I was very pleased with how well this module went. I had to work very hard and so did my students, but I discovered an interesting fact - <u>they are capable of much better writing than I thought</u> (<u>emphasis added</u>).

Writing samples. Included here is an essay in which a student summarizes the findings of her survey.

Student A:

Cheating Survey: The adult's opinion

The adults I interviewed thought that cheating was sometimes good but not right or fair, because you have to be honest. They thought that it could be beneficial but not right. One of the adults said he had never cheated. The other one said he may have cheated some time. The ways they thought that adults could cheat were at their work, in business, etc., almost any way. One of them had never seen anyone cheat, and the other one said he had seen some people. They wouldn't do nothing if they saw someone cheating, it's their problem and not of their business. People, they said, cheat because they think that what they obtain from it, it's better than the truth, than being honest. Generally, they thought that cheating was a dishonest and a dangerous thing to do.

Cheating Survey: The student's opinion

However, the students I interviewed had some different opinions. One of them thought that it was completely wrong to cheat, like the adults. But the others said that it was good some times but dangerous if you got caught. They said it could help you with your grades. They had seen people cheat and cheated themselves, to get good grades in the way that adults could cheat, their answers were, in their tax report, doing traffic infractions, and at their work. They wouldn't do any thing if they saw someone cheating either, because it's "none of my business," they said they think that people cheats to get good grades and to obtain better results.

In Conclusion

Cheating is a very controversial subject. Some people think it's very wrong to cheat, and indeed, they are cheaters. Others think it could be a benefit to cheat some ways. What do you think about cheating?

This teacher's procedures created a zone of proximal development for writing that incorporated direct contact with community members. The teacher, through

pre-writing discussions, established a proximal goal for the lesson and oriented the students to the activities necessary to achieve the goal. She then provided the help necessary, including material aid in developing the field questionnaires, so the students could write at levels much beyond what they could have done without assistance. As the students neared the end of the task, there were indications that they were assuming control over the writing and the teacher could disengage herself from directly guiding the process of writing. At all times the goal of the module was within sight of the students. The teachers help was provided strategically to facilitate the work necessary to deal with the more advanced writing activity required in this module.

Module VI

Teachers' seminar. This final module was devoted to persuasive writing. The goal, as in previous modules, was to have students build on previous work and knowledge to produce yet a different type of writing. The challenge for the teachers was to "repackage" how the module was structured to achieve a different writing goal. After five modules, teachers' seminars and several individual meetings the teachers could easily suggest several ways to rearrange instruction to meet the demands of a new module. They discussed the need to provide the students with a realistic audience for this module and how to clarify the nature of the audience through pre-writing activities.

However, at the teachers' request, most of the seminar was spent discussing details of the previous module in order to evaluate their experiences. In particular, we focused discussion on how easy it is to underestimate what students can accomplish, specially when we do not consciously create situations

in which help is available to perform at higher levels. We again discussed the importance of oranizing lessons that purposely made contact with aspects of community life. With information from the ethnography readily available, many ideas were forthcoming.

As a group, we also discussed again that parents in the community highly valued education. This was a theme repeated many times during the modules and it always elicited discussion, since it was motivating for the teachers to know that parental concern over education had not eroded as many teachers assumed.

The teachers seemed confident that they could implement writing activities to serve a variety of social and academic purposes. Some reported how they planned to integrate writing into other curriculum areas and all reported that the experience of participating in the project had significantly changed their conceptions of how to teach writing.

Module implementation. The notes quoted below show how one teacher connected the last two modules. All of the teachers were now planning the module activities in advance and adjusting instruction to the specific writing goals.

> Once again I thought a great deal about how to implement this module. As a pre-writing activity I wrote the prompt on the board: Cheating is always/sometimes/never right. One one half of the board I made three columns labeling them yes/no/maybe and asked the students to throw out as many ideas as possible for each category. I wrote them down as quickly as I could but did not require students to write them. I did class brainstorming to refresh their minds on all the ideas possible in each category. Having worked with this topic so long, they easily came up with 6 o 7 ideas for each column.
>
> I then told them since they had researched this topic as well as having expressed their own opinion on it, I would now like them to write a paper attempting to persuade or convince a person (another student) to their point of view. I emphasized the

importance of remembering who their audiences were and the need to stick to one point of view - no switching!

I asked them to take a few minutes to decide which point of view they were going to support and review the ideas on the board. While they did that, I passed back their explanatory papers, commenting that they could use ideas from them. In addition, I noticed that most of the class did use their last essays as sources. After about five minutes most of them began writing altogether and about 20 minutes was spent on pre-writing.

I walked about the room giving assistance to students.

Oh, I almost forgot! I asked students to add explanatory sentence after each opinion statement to add validity to their papers. I gave some examples to the class; I'm sure you'll notice my examples in this paragraphs, as well as their own. This was a different idea, and some had trouble with it.

Most of the students wrote quietly and thoughtfully, frequently looking at the board to remember ideas. Their essays generally were thoughtful and long on facts! They certainly know this topic.

Writing samples. Below we have included three samples from this module. Note the differential success of these three students in writing persuasively, but also note how they integrated information gathered in the previous module into their essays.

Student A:

I believe that cheating may be right or fair. It may be wrong and unfair too. I think that cheating may be right when you need good grades, like in a very important test. It can be good, too, when you are lazy and do not want to study, it's very easy to copy some one else's work. But you might get caught when you do this, and it can be a lot worse than studying. It may be right in an emergency, like when you are in a hurry for some very important reason, like your mother in the hospital, and you have just been informed about it, and you get caught in a traffic jam. It may be right when the rules are not fair, or you are not guilty for something some one say you did, it may be helpful to cheat. I believe that cheating may be right some times, but not always. Cheating it's dangerous too. You can get in real troubles with the law, the teacher, or your family. And cheating it's not honest, not either

for you or others. You will never learn if you cheat in school work. You can cause trouble not only to your self, but to others. I believe that cheating should be left to our own responsibility. It can help a lot sometimes and there are emergencies, too. But it can be very harmful for everyone, too. Think twice before cheating, no matter what situation.

Student B:

I believe cheating is not fair because every time you cheat your hurting yourself. I think it´s never right to cheat cause your cheating on yourself plus your risking on getting caught. You´ll never know how good or smart you are at that specific topic you´re cheating on. You can always hear teachers, parents and other adults telling your cheating isn´t right and you never listen but later in life you regret it and wish you were back in school learning alot of things that would be a help to you and you say to yourself "I should of studyed" or "I should of listened." Sometimes you think that you´ll get a good grade on something becausé your cheating and it turns out to be that they or who ever is giving you the answer is wrong too. I know cheating is wrong and I cheat sometimes myself but I´m still against it.

Student C:

I believe that cheating is sometimes right or fair. Sometimes it is Okay. Lie if you are lazy to do your homework, but if you know what you are doing then it´s ok. Another thing you might cheat on, is on test to get a better grade. But I don´t really agree on that. First of all cause it´s not fair for the other person and because it won´t do any good to you later on in the future. But some people do cheat on tests a lot. That is up to them. One thing that it might be fair to cheat on and I do agree on this is on emergency. Like if a lady is going to give birth and they are taking her to the hospital in emergency you go real fast and you pass the red light. Sometimes it´s okay to do that but as long as you don´t go that fast and cause any accidents.

Now on the other hand sometimes it is not right to cheat. First of all you will not get anything out of it. You won´t learn. Then later on you won´t have a good job cause you don´t know anything. Another thing is because it´s not fair for the other people

who did study. This is what sometimes happens. The person that cheated on a test from the person that cheated gets a better grade than the one that really study and didn't cheat. Know that definitely is not fair.

So for all this reasons I think that sometimes it is fair to cheat but sometimes it isn't. So I advise you to be careful and to think before you do anything or you cheat.

We'll conclude this section by quoting from the teacher's journal as she comments on changes in the students writing over time.

Another difference I've noticed in the students - they're very anxious to get these assignments back. They know, I believe, their writing is better, and want to know if I agree. Every day until I return papers, they ask for them.

Their time on task has also steadily increased from the beginning of the semester, 10 minutes to 40 minutes.

The amount of assistance from me has steadily diminished as the amount of pre-writing has increased.

ESL classrooms

This section reviews a remarkable module conducted in one of the ESL classrooms. We selected this particular module to describe in detail because it illustrates one good way to capitalize on extra-curricular sources to help develop the English writing of limited-English speaking students. Furthermore, this module shows that the ESL teacher employed the same system being used the other teachers in their "regular" classroom; that is, the same principles of instruction were being applied under different conditions. From our perspective, individual differences between ESL and non-ESL students refer to the different levels at which students enter the writing activity and the nature of the help they need to perform at the most advanced level possible. Whether fluent or non-fluent in English, instruction is organized for students

to engage in the same basic educational activity: writing for communication. Given their English language difficulties, ESL students may conribute differentially to the completion of the activity than regular students, and the teacher may have to provide more structured help, but both sets of students are participating in comparable intellectual activities. In the module cited below, the theme for writing was bilingualism, since the teacher and students had expressed so much interest in this topic and had written about it in a preceding module. We quote at length from the teacher's journal.

> Today, half way through the period, we began this 5th module by reviewing the writing we had done. I spent most time asking them about their last "bilingualism" papers, Module 4, and they remembered a lot about them. We reviewed and I listed on the board that that paper had been expressive in nature, their own feelings and opinions. That was readily accepted.
>
> I told them the (next) module was going to be concerned with information, opinions, feelings, etc., that would be gleaned from other sources besides themselves. They looked at me with blank faces. Then I started to discuss and probe the meaning of "survey" and "questionnaire" with them. They loved that.!" I gave examples of TV polls, of Cola tests, etc. Jorge and Lisa called out, "Does that mean we're going to do that?" They all were kind of excited or at least interested when I said "yes."
>
> I "fed" them the beginning questions for their questionnaires, ones I wanted to make sure all asked. I gave them three they had to use, and two more samples they could choose. The assignment was explained as follows:
>
> These three questions all must ask:
>
> A. What language do you speak best?
> B. What language do you read and write best?
> C. Do any members of your family who live with you speak another language besides English?
>
> Two other questions were optional:
>
> D. Would you be willing to take classes

to become bilingual?
E. What career do you forsee in your future in which you would benefit by being bilingual?

Each student was required to ask:

A. Two adults not working on campus.
B. Two adults who do work on campus.
C. Three students whose first language is English.
D. Three students whose first language is other than English.

Homework for tonight was to invent three additional questions related to bilingualism and people's opinions about it.

The module continued the next day as the teacher got the students to generate additional questions to use in the survey.

Module V: Day Two.

Today's whole period was devoted to the project. Five students--Jacqueline, Amanda, Juan, Abelardo, and Rita--got double O's. Abelardo didn't understand. Hector, who hastily scribbled some questions up by the time I got to him, came in moaning he didn't understand. I had him seek help from others. He's a very dependent 7th grader!

I walked around the room, reading each student's questions and putting V's next to ones I wanted put on the board. A few I helped reword a bit. Surprisingly, after such a shaky start with my questions, there were 10 questions I felt were good enough to be examples to everyone, with several duplicates. By the time I finished checking all ten were on the board, and we began to discuss and reword for accuracy, each one. I told students they may choose 3 questions from these--their own or any one else's--to use on their surveys.

Their homework tonight is to prepare their questionnaires on large construction paper (samples with the work turned in) and try out the questions on 2 people by tomorrow. I spent 10-15 minutes at the end of the period sitting with about 8 students showing them how I'd do one--an example--and I posted it for all to see. They were anxious to get started--borrowed rulers, chose paper colors, talked over question choices with each other.

These seemed to be the best:

1) Would you prefer to live around bilingual people in a bilingual community?

2) Are your closest friends bilingual?

3) a) Would you like to go to the University?
   b) Do you know that the best university require four years of 2nd language training?

4) Which language do you like the best of the ones you don't speak?

5) What language do you speak with your friends? Why?

6) How many teachers do you have that speak some Spanish?

7) Do you think you would like to return to live where you learned your first language?

8) Which language does your closest friend speak with you?

9) Do you think speaking another language is important?

10) Is it comparatively hard for you to learn another language?

Module V: Day Three Knowing her students would need further guidance in conducting the survey, the teacher spent part of the lesson clarifying examples and general concerns. Note the interest generated by the students interviewing adult respondents.

This is a minimum day with only about 25 minutes to the period, but I used the time today to share some good (visually) examples of questionnaires and to address some general concerns. First, as I looked around, I recognized the handwriting of Jeff (my principal), Gloria S. (The AP), and other adults. The students had handed the questionnaires to the person and told them to answer them. I instructed that all future entries must be in students' own handwriting and that they were to ask the questions orally, explicating if necessary since a few answers were not directed appropriately. The students didn't even moan at that; they thought that was logical for practicing oral English. Second, I asked the students to come up with at least one person who did not value bilingualism.

So as not to have totally bias results, I asked the students to come up with at least one person who did not value bilingualism. Also, students must identify the person questioned with full name.

The students were buzzing when they came in and they buzzed all along! Some had never had occasion to speak to adults other than their teachers here, and a few, especially Hector C. and George (come to mind) were itching to show me Dr. S's responses, etc.

The teacher structures some more help to move the students along and to maintain their interest in quite an involved writing activity.

The projects are shaping up and they seem to have a clear idea of what they are doing at this step, so I decided today to introduce the next step. Most had time in class to start formulating a "Results" page. I just put a suggested format on the board and explained after they had gotten their results, they could fill in the results chart. My sample looked like this:

Results

Questions	Agree Yes	Disagree No
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Since we had a Cultural Fair in the afternoon, I gave no homework other than to complete questioning of minimum of 10 people by class tomorrow. They didn't feel hard-pressed to get this done.

The teacher spend a lot of time on the module and at each step of the way she made sure that the students were in contact with the goal of the lesson. That is, the several tasks necessary to complete the module were done to

accomplish a specified and mutually understood goal, at no time were the students relegated to doin writing exercises unrelated to the purpose of the writing activity that makes up the module.

Module V: Day Four. As the module continues, the students show signs of taking over the activity without the need for highly structured supervision. Noticing this change, the teacher decides to be less directive and have the students assume most of the responsibility for completing the necessary tasks. This shift in the control of the task is alluded to in the next excerpt.

> Not too many completed rough drafts in class today, but they certainly were well on their way. I allowed them to take them home over the weekend, hoping to get polished work back on Monday.
>
> In class, there was a lot of constructive communicating going on--students asked each other "How to say" this and that, and asked me (usually) "how do I do it?" (After I had already explained the questions they had a difficult time, getting going, but I decided not to hand-feed them this time, but instead to let them muddle through. I answered specific questions today, but I didn't volunteer the questions, if you know the difference. I sent them home to finish by Monday.

The students returned Monday with their papers in different stages of completion. The teacher selected one of the more complete papers and placed it on an overhead to show it to the class. They then proceeded to edit the paper together and to clarify the type of paper required in the module. The balance of the class was used to write more drafts and to revise those already turned in.

Writing samples.

Student A:

The people in cy cumminuty think that being bilingual is bery important for several good reasons. Firts, I felt very proud doing the Survey. the people in our commuinity feel very proud at them self that they speak Spanish and Eanglish because they can talk with there friends in any of those two lenguages. Secondly, the people I ask Some were bilingual students and adults 60% were bilingual people and 40% weren´t bilingual people. Also, I ask a teacher and a student if they would be wiling to work as a bilingual person and they said no and than I ask a Student this qiestion Do you think Speaking Another lenguage is important and he said no that amazed me because I never herd one person that thinks that speaking another lenguage ain´t important. finally, I ask a teacher that What career was he interested in that would require a 2nd language and he said no common and he told this I don´t know What laugage I´m interestes that would require a 2nd lenguage because I don´t know it and I ask two Students this question what career are yo interested in that would require a 2nd lenguage and 50% said Fransh 10% said Germen 10% said Italian and 20% said no coman as you can see I was having fun.

Student B:

I found that people in our community feel good about belingualism for several good reasons. They think it it very importanc because they can communicate with other people. The people I asked are 60% students, 40% adults, 70% are Spanish speakers, 20% were English speakers, 70% can write and read English, 20% can write and read Spanish well. Most of the people told me that in there house can speak English and Spanish. The people I ask the questions, answers me very polite and they said the questions were very interesting. Some person said that these project was very good for me and interesting for him. When he said that I feel very good about the work I was doing. The most interesting thing that I found wat that the people like the project. Most of the people said that they were willing to take classes to become totally belingual because it could help them right now and in the future. The students I ask said that they have only friends that speak only Spanish and English not othey language. The adults I ask said that been belingual is very important for them because they can communicate with more people and they can have more opportunitis for some jobs that othey people do I feel very good about the way people answer me.

Student C:

First, In my school, I asked some students and aduls. If they are bilinguals, some people are bilingual and someones are not in my school. Some of them tall me they are bilinguals. somea____ they´re not bilinguals about the 50%. Seconly, In my community some people is don´t intersting about to be bilingual because they think, they don´t need toher lenguage because they are in America and in America only speak English. Thirth, I don´t felt good, because I think they are a little dum people because they think to be a bilingual person is waste them time. Also, I think the people who´s don´t interesting to be them selfs bilingual are going to the wrong way because the persons who speak two languages or more have the oportunity to know other culture and lenguage. Finaly, In my family think to be a bilingual is to important because they learn other culture and language, And we speak spanish and we need speak English because we live in U.S.A. but like in diferent countries is important to know other lnguages for we can talk with other persons.

This ESL teacher, as well as the others, used formula paragraphs to get the students writing. Most felt, and we agreed, that the added structure facilitated participation and performance in writing activities that the students otherwise could not do because of their oral language limitations. Of course, the idea is that as the students gain fluency in English they start relying less on the tight structure of the formula paragraphs, and move towards more flexible and independent writing.

The idea of creating zones of proximal development for writing that motivated shifts in the control of the task from teacher to student was the same idea applied in the non-ESL classrooms. The goals of the writing modules were also the same in all classrooms, the nature of instruction differed as the teachers dealt with specific problems students had in their classrooms. A major role of any ESL teacher should be to tap those skills that the students have developed in their first language and put them to good use in the service of academic goals in their second language. In the "regular" classrooms,

pre-writing, free writing, and response groups were combined in several ways to get the students actively engaged in writing and prepared for more advanced efforts. In the ESL classrooms the same strategies were used to bring into the classroom the students experiences and skills and the formula paragraphs were used as the "crutch" to get and keep the students on task. Obviously, the students' difficulties in English verbal expression, reading and vocabulary development needed remedy, but the "trick" was to organize lessons in ways that accommodated these difficulties and minimized their constraining influence, while maximizing the use of the tools that the students did possess, such as knowledge of the topic and other experiences. As the examples above illustrate, this goal was being accomplished; students who would otherwise do little or not classroom writing, were writing essays in their second language that incorporated information collected from the community.

Summary

In the modules presented above, we described the implementation of several diverse writing activities utilizing a "system" for teaching writing practiced and developed during the initial modules. In particular, we tried linking writing instruction with ethnographic findings by making this contact a goal of the writing activities. We emphasized to teachers that this contact could be a regular feature of classroom writing by organizing writing instruction for communication. This instructional organization is in turn made possible by making writing relevant to the students' everyday concerns. It is this interaction between the organization of instruction and the social organization of community life that holds promise for developing effective academic writing programs for the students in the project.

Holistic Ratings

Holistic ratings were used in scoring the students' pre and post writing samples as well as the writing produced by Modules one and six. This represents the scoring of over 1,000 writing samples. Our host school district uses holistic ratings in scoring their minimum competency writing test. Utilization of their rating system satisfied our research purposes in evaluating change and had the added advantage of making the results directly relevant and comparable to the school district. Therefore, we decided to employ the same rubric and scale used by the District in scoring the project's student writings.

The school district's rubric contains two scores, 8 points for content and 5 points for mechanics (see Progress Report, Fall 1982). Each student's writing sample is read and scored by two readers, with their scores combined to obtain the student's total score. Therefore, scores can range from a maximum of 26 to a minimum of two. Mastery level is 12 points and above. Three readers scored the students' writing, a project researcher and a teacher, both experienced in the use of the holistic rating, and a doctoral student from UCSD who was trained for the occasion.

Most samples were read twice; only if the initial two scores showed a two point difference was the writing given a third reading and scoring. In such cases, this third reading and the closest previous score were used to tabulate the total score.

Care was taken to create comparable conditions for pre and posttesting For example, the prompts were equated. The prompt used for the pretest was, "I believe junk food should be sold on campus. Why or why not? Give reasons to support your opinion." The prompt used for the posttest sample was, "Should students be allowed to chew gum and eat in their classroom? Why or why not? Give reasons to support your opinion." The testing conditions for both were identical, with no prewriting provided and a 40 minute time limit to write. The readers were unaware which of the prompts was used for pre-testing.

Modules 1 and 6 were also scored holistically. We felt that in addition to the pre and post samples, these modules would provide yet another, although qualitatively different measure of student improvement.

Results

A comparison of the pre and post test scores for the total sample (this represents only the students who were present for both tests) indicates a statistically significant gain over the period of the study (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 About Here

In interpreting these scores it is important to keep in mind that the sample of students represents a very diverse group. The classrooms that participated in the study represented three grade levels and included three different groups of ESL, two math classes, regular English classes and three students from a Special Education class (who, by the way, all showed gains). Given this diversity, and the fact that there were only six writing modules imple-

Table 2

Comparison of Pre- and Post-Writing Test Scores for Total Population (N = 205)**

	Pre	Post	t
mean	9.05	10.20	-2.60 *
SD	2.88	6.18	

* P > .01 df = 204

** students who took both tests

Table 3

Comparison of Writing Pre- and Post-test Scores for Spanish Surnamed Students (N - 121) **

	Pre	Post	t
mean	8.65	9.27	-2.92 *
SD	2.99	2.52	

* P > .004 df = 120

** students who took both tests

mented, the results reported above provide support for the effectiveness of the interventions.

Table 3 presents results of a pre and posttest comparison with the Spanish surnamed students.

Insert Table 3 About Here

This subsample was selected for analysis because they represent the largest ethnolinguistic group in our sample and of primary interest to our project. As the table shows, the mean differences between the pre and post test were statistically significant. This result is important because this category of student consistently scores low in district tests of writing competency, despite administrative efforts aimed at improving their writing skills. We should mention that the tests were administered solely in English. Similar gains were found when we compared the scores of the students in the standard assessment situation to their performance in the modules. In short, using the district's own methods, the students showed marked improvement in their writing skills. These results support the effectiveness of our intervention strategies.

Discussion

In the proposal we stated our belief that literacy is as much a social as it is a cognitive activity; the cognitive and social are inseparable components of writing. This understanding guides our suggestions for how ethnographic data can be best utilized in classroom practice. We emphasize the

word "in" because useful and longlasting integration of ethnographic findings and instruction has to occur through the teaching-learning activity in the classroom. For this to happen, the usefulness of writing has to be made understandable to students. One useful way to accomplish this goal is to embed writing in vital activities. This subordination of writing to communicative goals qualitatively changes the nature of writing for both teachers and students by shifting the focus of instruction from the development of distinct and separate "skills", to the use and development of these skills as part of a process for accomplishing an intellectual activity.

The modules described in this report were designed to help teachers try out several techniques that would assist them to teach writing as communication. However, as we emphasized, it is not simply the modules alone that makes for effective interventions, their effectiveness depends upon how they are used together as part of an instructional system. It is our belief that the rich knowledge children bring from home serve as an especially useful medium within which to functionally organize individual strategies into an effective classroom writing system. into an effective classroom writing system. When isolated, writing techniques become mechanical. Flexible writing activities are promoted by the use of socially relevant themes for writing. Community issues change the goals and motives for teaching-learning writing. In our modules they changed the purpose of writing for both teachers and students and reorganized instruction. This strongly suggests that to implement effective writing instruction in the schools in which we worked, teachers would be well advised to make contact with community life.

We started the project committed to the principled incorporation of community data into the classroom, but did not anticipate how much the way in which we conducted the field work would depend upon constraints imposed by the way that instruction takes place. That is, unless we shaped our idea of an appropriate instructional activity, the ethnographic observations we made were difficult to link to practice. We discovered the need to make writing instruction more ethnographic-like as part of our basic research problem. This strategy of research/instruction makes the teaching of writing a process that includes exploration, discovery and uncovering of social life. If our analysis is correct, the school can make strategic use of the fact that classroom activities mediate the relationship between the school and the community. A strategy that builds on this mediating aspect of classroom activities has several advantages. It builds transfer of community information into a broad range of academic activities. It also can build transfer of school (writing) activities into a broad range of social situations. We also argue that this is achievable using extant classroom resources. What is needed is an orientation to the relevance of social life for learning and a system of writing instruction (interactions) that permits continual contact with the real world.

Thus, a major use of the ethnographic research is to provide opportunities for the reorganization of teaching-learning activities. This may occur in several ways. In our experience, it started by making the researchers, and through the researchers, the teachers, aware of the importance of explicitly shaping instruction through the social issues identified by the ethnographic interviews and observations. Initially, this link was accomplished by the use of socially relevant themes for writing. The introduction of these themes and their exploration in writing, qualitatively changed the conditions for

writing. It changed both the ends and means of writing. In so doing, it involved the teachers and students in a different kind of educational activity, in which writing functioned properly in its role of a tool of the intellect in the service of social and academic goals. It also gave pre-writing discussions new meaning; they became "thick descriptions," rich contexts that support entry of student goals, experiences, and opinions into the activity of writing.

The introduction of student response groups helped the students start to assume feedback functions previously reserved for the teacher, and clarified for the teachers how the intellectual and mechanical aspects of writing are interrelated. It made clear to teachers that they often provided help by specifying grammatical corrections at the expense of other kinds of assistance; teachers reported that these activities helped them to monitor what and how they provided help and how this help was distributed in the classroom. The initial modules showed that the students could write beyond previous expectations, and showed the teachers that they could, in fact, teach writing effectively.

The initial interventions also created new, more favorable conditions for exploring how to use the ethnographic research in educational settings. For the final modules we developed a plan that would help turn the initial strategies which were isolated units, into a theory driven instructional writing system that could be adapted to different writing activities. A higher order goal of this system, one that would help organize the purpose and process of writing, would be to use community concerns discovered through ethnographic research in the service of teaching. As one way to extend this generalizing

strategy, we attempted to include a homework assignment that would bring parents or other community members into the classroom writing system as part of one of the modules. We purposely chose a homework assignment as the vehicle because of field reports identifying homework as an important family literacy event. The idea was to have the students collect information about a specific theme from the elders and then use this information to increase the students' and teachers' knowledge about the topic that the class was writing about. The homework assignment would serve as one of the mediating steps to writing and illustrate the utility of extra-curricular sources for the development of writing.

However, establishing community concerns as the higher order goal, by itself, is insufficient. It may help orient the students to the importance of going beyond the classroom to make writing relevant and effective, but instruction still has to be systematically organized in so far as writing is going to be a means to achieve this goal. This is where the concept of a "zone of proximal development" is of major utility. It provides an interactional frame focused around the higher order goals embedded in the activity. In the example we cite in the body of the report, the students were required to interview adults and children regarding their views on cheating. This information was used to expand a previously written paper by including additional details not immediately available within the classroom. The activity of developing a way to formally collect the information needed and how to use this information for writing is clearly beyond the level of competence of the students. However, the task can be accomplished with the assistance of more knowledgeable persons, in this instance, the teacher and parents. The teacher can "bridge the distance" between what the students are able to do

individually and what the task requires them to do by providing them with the help to facilitate a capable performance at this higher level. The theory predicts that with practice the students will appropriate this help and eventually perform what was previously a task too advanced, independently and competently.

This is exactly what happened. The teacher helped the students put together a questionnaire to structure data collection and gave them suggestions on how to gather data. Once collected, she organized classroom discussions to help them extract relevant information and helped them include this information in their writing. This is what we mean by "teaching proximally for communication." Proximally in the sense that instruction is calibrated to be in advance of what the students are individually capable of doing; this proximal goal is established and achieved by linking instruction to the real world through ethnography. Ethnography provides both the content and the context for educational activity when at the heart of the activity is the students discovering and achieving a goal as part of the process of writing.

IV. Contributions of Ethnographic Research to Educational Practice: The Implementation of Writing Instruction

Basis for Pedagogical Reform: the Role of Ethnography

Educational practice and pedagogical reforms are based on our understanding of the nature of teaching/learning processes, the factors that contribute to success or failure, the anticipated responses of students and our overall pedagogical assumptions. To attribute academic failure in minority (especially ethnolinguistic minority) students to linguistic and cultural deficits does not sufficiently explain the data we have collected. The unwillingness to change instructional practice may hide behind simplistic explanations of cultural deficits. Our research has clearly demonstrated that the right type of instructional and pedagogical strategies can drastically change the outcomes in the education of ethnolinguistic minority students. However, the reorganization of instruction, the search for new pedagogical strategies, and the overall realization that there is a need for changes in the teaching of writing, are all directly and unequivocally related to the ethnographic research that preceded or accompanied pedagogical innovations. Part II of this report, "Classroom component: The implementation of writing activities," has shown how the organizational structure of the teaching of writing via the use of the new writing modules resulted in more active and fruitful participation of students as well as in drastically different tangible outcomes, i.e. writing ability by the end of the experimental module instruction. Ethnographic research was highly instrumental in the implementation of writing instruction. In the early phases of instructional work ethnographic notes increased substantially the teachers' awareness of the specific sociocultural context of students and their community: social class, linguistic, subcultural, religious and political differences. During the activities aiming at designing and executing new and experimental writing tasks, ethnographic data provided important feedback regarding the response of students and their own contributions to the organization of the tasks. From the close interaction with students' parents in the "Cafes de Amistad" and

other direct interaction with community people, researchers confronted serious decisions on the nature of writing needed in the modules, namely, expository writing. The ongoing observation of students during their writing exercises led the researchers to capitalize on students' repertoire of real life experiences and concerns for the choice of writing topics and the selection of analytical categories for writing effectiveness. Ultimately, the types and proportions of instructional reform experimentally designed and executed during the research period was in direct response to the ethnographic observations and data gathered concommitantly with the experimental instructional modules.

The intimate relationship between the ethnographic study of the community and the curriculum experimentation was based on the conviction that no effective curriculum change could be done without the basic ethnographic information about the students' community and family. Thus, the organization of theoretical seminars for the teachers (in their capacity as co-researchers, trainees in ethnographic methods, innovators, classroom students, and often friends), were designed to prepare teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the relevance of the sociocultural context of education, of the need to become more sensitive to this context prior to becoming an effective teacher, and and of the need to target specific goals related to instructional effectiveness. By the same token, the organization of the writing modules, in each and all of its sequential phases, recognized the ethnographic data provided by the researchers, the parents of the pupils under study, and by the teachers themselves as they began to learn how to gather ethnographic data. Thus, for example, the use of observational journals was highly instrumental in helping

the teachers document the actual implementation of the experimental writing curriculum, and also in teaching them to reflect on what had actually happened during the instruction. Before we had analyzed the quantitative results of the pre- and posttests (as shown in our tables 2 and 3) teachers' journals made us aware that a radical change had taken place in the classroom. As one teacher put it: "I was impressed with the result. It also furthered my belief that if what is taught is important in the mind of the learner, much more will truly be learned." (Module 1) Or as another teacher wrote with precision and eloquence: "I had stressed improvement in development, form, organization and proofreading. I had many thoughtful questions. They spent the entire period writing. Very few were finished at the end of the period. Exciting! At least 7 or 8 kids asked if they could take them home. I almost tingled inside! The next day, some students still wanted to work on their papers... This project is teaching me at great deal. I have loads to learn about the teaching of writing. Hopefully, I will be a better teacher because of it." (Module II, teacher).

While previous ethnographic studies had focused on the need to provide a cultural translation for the teacher of what was relevant or significant from the standpoint of the pupil (Au, 1980; Au & Jordan, 1981; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982, Brice-Heath, 1982, and many others), few had found the way of utilizing ethngraphic data as a means to create educational change, specifically to define the direction of curricular reform needed for the students in question. As reported above, in the introduction of the second part of this report, some ethnographers clearly stated that they had found very little transfer value in the communicative competence of minority children from the

sociocultural context, the community, in which they lived. The transfer of the ethnographic data into "lessons" for curriculum reform was not possible until teachers themselves became ethnographically sensitive and competent. If teachers are seen not only as RECIPIENTS OF RESEARCH, but also as PARTICIPANTS in a joint venture of discovering pedagogical values and potentials embedded in the home learning environment, then the dichotomy between researchers and practitioners is unnecessary.

Vygotsky, Ethnography and Pedagogical Reform

From a Vygotskian perspective the role relationship between researchers and teachers as partners of a joint venture in pedagogical discoveries was demanded by the very assumption of required conditions for learning. If writing is seen as an integral part of the school interactional system, i.e. a sine qua non of schooling with specific skills, purposes, objectives and levels, then it follows that students entering level of skill and students' active role in determining their effective zone of proximal development requires the intervention of a sensitive teacher who knows how to create the appropriate learning environment. In other words, ethnographic training and experimentation in the development of writing modules was the best means to implement the instructional effectiveness of teachers, because doing ethnographic observations and journals they learned to notice and document previously ignored cues which were critical to assess the children's capabilities and potentials.

It is important to explain why from a Vygotskian perspective training in ethnographic research methods became the turning point for teachers in the

discovery of teaching effectiveness, particularly in the context of writing instruction. Let us take as an example some of the fundamental theoretical principles of this perspective.

PRINCIPLE ONE: learning activities cannot be separated from social activities. In fact, social activities are primarily interpsycholgoical and allow a person to internalize and develop cognitive skills considered to be primarily intrapsychological. Thus the process of internalization seems to be a logical follow up to the process of social performance. It is is this sense that performance precedes skills acquisition (as noted above in the discussion of the work by other ethnographers). The significance of the principle, if EXPERIENCED via ethnographic inquiry, permits the teacher to understand his/her power to facilitate or impede children's skill acquisition it SIMPLY by structuring classroom participation in certain ways. The control teachers have on participant structures for classroom interaction permits them the creation of learning environments for specific students. In the context of writing research the teachers became gradually aware of the inter- and intrapsychological complementarity of learning processes and of the significance of the peer coaching efforts in obtaining a better understanding of complex cognitive processes. In other words, teachers became aware that peers are often better teachers. This realization that took several weeks of careful observations and documentation via ethnographic journals finally was translated into curriculum changes in various ways: to let peer groups form and work together with no interference, to use students as instructors in some special cases, to permit students make more decisions affecting the organization of instruction and to monitor each others' progress.

PRINCIPLE TWO: Inter- and intrapsychological genetic transitions are not unidirectional but complementary and conducive to the acquisition of new cognitive skills at different levels of abstraction. The significance of this principle is that it explains further the relationship between the social context of learning and acquisition of certain cognitive skills. Social performance is no longer seen as irrelevant to the acquisition of cognitive skills but a an integral part of the same process. During the theoretical seminars teachers became aware that peer coaching (among teachers, in the context of theoretical discussions about ethnographic research) forced them to go back and forth from their day-to-day experience and personal reflection to the complex conceptualizations of phenomena which were comparable and had general properties. For example in the process of teaching how to edit poor compositions. The teachers effectively utilized peer coaching thusly. Teachers also became aware that at times they needed to be alone and think through some issues, while at other times they needed to compare notes with peers. The internalization of this principle had significant consequences for instruction. Teachers began to observe similar responses in their own students and to encourage the complementary exchanges between social interaction on a classroom topic and the individual concentration to think about it. The flexibility of the instructional process was truly enhanced, since previously some of the social exchanges were considered totally non relevant to the purpose of the instruction.

PRINCIPLE THREE: To build an adequate learning environment instructors must permit students to determine their zone of proximal development, to become active agents of their own learning. This principle implies that the skill

level of the entering students determines the organizational structure of instruction, the level of instruction with respect to the sophistication of the content as well as to the actual sociolinguistic forms used to communicate the content. The significance of the active role that students are expected to play has been recognized for a long time. What teacher were not aware of was that the skills level at the point of entry could be inferred more effectively using ethnographic techniques and that the participant structures created by the teacher were often not recognizing this diversity in entering skill levels of pupils. The importance of appropriate communicative behavior was further emphasized with the next principle.

PRINCIPLE FOUR: effectiveness in teaching requires communicative competence which includes sociolinguistic and cultural competence as well. Communicative behavior proceeds by means of chains of understandings and inferences which allow interactors to interpret the meaning from moment to moment guided by a cumulation of linguistic, paralinguistic and kinesic cues. Because these interactional cues potentially have many meanings in differenct contexts, it is essential that the interactors recognize contexts and the appropriate meanings associated with these contexts. Teachers have gradually become aware that cultural differences may entail an entirely different interpretation of communicative exchanges that have a specific and possibly different meaning within the school/classroom context. They have learned that it is essential to identify for their students the context of instruction in order to enable understanding of instruction. In the actual implementation of writing skills teachers helped children articulate the precise meaning they were searching for. Children's response to violence, love, racism, family problems, the

expressions about gang organization and "vatos locos" all finally convinced the teachers that there was a different world of meanings in the heads of the students, and that those hidden meanings could blossom into powerful written compositions. The realization of the cultural distance between some Hispanic children and the school had not impacted the teachers' awareness, nor had it affected teaching strategies. This realization had immediate consequences: it created respect for individual students and their world, and it forced the teachers to integrate in the instruction with some of the elements of the students' world. This phenomenon occurred in our project as we transitioned from the first module to subsequently following. Ethnographic research and curriculum experimentation proved to be a powerful combination for some of the teachers/researchers who worked with us this project. Lack literacy skills or lower level of skills to generate text, for example, began to be seen in the sociocultural context of the students' world. While going to school and acquiring writing skills was important for students (especially if the instruction was geared to their level and was structured in ways meaningful to them), there were other priorities that had not been recognized by teachers: survival, both physical and emotional, family commitments, economic necessities, and oral communication. The paucity of literacy activities and generation of text in the homes (especially if compared with middle class Anglo families) was better understood when viewed from the perspective of the students personal backgrounds. It seems important that in order for instruction to be effective the school needs to recognize that the students are often involved in a transitional period, making a move from low income and illiteracy family backgrounds as well as making other drastic changes in the attempt to comprehend a very new complex social system in a new country.

Implications of Present Research: Combining Experimental with Ethnographic Methods

The implications of this ethnographic and experimental research project go beyond the significant finding that indeed Hispanic junior high students, including those whose home environment is poor in terms of exposure to text and academic exercises, can acquire the skills to write well, provided there is appropriate instruction, motivation and sociocultural congruence in instruction. One of the most remarkable findings was that ethnographic training was a powerful instrument to create educational reform, both in terms of philosophical/fundamental views of the teacher's role in the process of sharing knowledge as well as of the learner's role, and of the complementarity of functions during the communicative process in classroom interaction.

The obvious increase in writing skills exhibited by the students studied in this project after the completion of the six modules is not only the result of "new techniques" in teaching, nor of new awareness of teachers of the cultural background of Hispanic children. It is the result of (1) a complex and subtle change in the relationship between teacher and student, and (2) a radical change in the organization structure of the teaching process, manifested especially in the participant structures generated by the teachers in response to students' needs. The value of ethnographic inquiry was notonly to bring cultural knowledge to the instructors and to avail them with new ideas for building a "culturally relevant curriculum" which did occur. The unique value of ethnographic inquiry was to train the educational practitioners to do research and to use research findings for purposes of innovating more

effective ways of organizing instruction.

The recognition that teachers themselves played a crucial role in this research project, and they themselves generated much of the innovative ways of teaching junior high Hispanic students how to write well in English, does not minimize the role of the researchers. In fact, researchers became more effective partners in the experimental project as they themselves, side by side with the teachers, discovered from module to module the importance of the four principles discussed above and the specific ways in which those principles operated. Ethnographic research is powerful in its apparent simplicity precisely because it demands drastic rearrangements of role relationships: researcher/teacher, teacher/students. Ethnographic inquiry changed teachers' and researchers' judgements about students' performance and potential, about the importance of their community life and their world outside school, on the power of their religious beliefs and of their family ties, traditions and values. Ethnographic inquiry makes us examine values which otherwise are assume or overlooked. For example, while the acceptance of literacy as a fundamental value and as a condition for living in the U.S. is assumed by the educational system, it does not necessarily hold the same value for the ethnolinguistic minority students who are concerned with more basic survival skills such as: physical integrity and safety, family, cultural integrity and community; status whitin peer group his grasping of the relationship between literacy AS DEFINED BY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT and personal survival, and the satisfaction of more tangible dreams as a young person (love, belonging in a social group, materials possessions, friendship, sports and general welfare).

There are other implications from our research project for the understanding of educational reform. The social and cultural distance between home and school has very specific and tangible consequences for the training of teachers and the selection of curriculum materials. It is not enough to recognize that the onus of the reform cannot be placed primarily or exclusively on the shoulders of the learner (especially the minority learner). We must go beyond recognize that social and cultural distance mean cognitive distance and lower skill level at the point of entry. This recognition requires a special type and degree of perceptivity on the part of the teacher whose main concern is to aim at the students' zone of proximal development in order to be effective. In turn, this requires that the teacher sees reality from the standpoint of the student and knows how to read cues appropriately.

From the realization that an effective curriculum reform had to start with a realistic assessment of the learning environment of students' in the home and community, we moved to the realization that good will and technical expertise in teachers are necessary but not sufficient in order to implement an effective writing curriculum. In fact what came accross as a simple truth was that writing instructors needed to learn how to communicate effectively with junior high school children from Hispanic background. This statement was also true for Chicano teachers who assumed they had high level of communicative competence with that particular audience. Furthermore, a third realization was that the acquisition of communicative competence in the context of writing required some skills on the part of the teachers that permitted them evaluate the child's entering literacy level. At this point we felt we could engage in

the more technical and pragmatic effort of constructing with the teachers modules that would catch the attention of their pupils.

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APPENDIX A

REVISED PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

(Execution of Task 3)

REVISED PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

IMPROVING THE FUNCTIONAL WRITING OF BILINGUAL SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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TASK 3: IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

For practical purposes we will distinguish the concepts of implementation and evaluation as follows: The former is taken to mean the process of execution of a plan of activities, while the latter would refer to the assessments of its effectiveness. Implementation should therefore indicate the nature, steps, order and logistics underlying proposed activities; evaluation should spell out how the monitoring process of guaranteeing orderly execution and the expected outcomes of the activities will be set. Both implementation and evaluation allude to a distribution of roles and responsibilities.

Implementation

The order of execution of planned writing activities is captured in the timetable below: (TABLE 1)

TABLE 1 TIMETABLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF WRITING ACTIVITIES

Dates	Activities/Steps
Dec 81-Jan 82	Planning, interviewing of teachers, principals and formalizing teacher involvement.
Jan 1-Feb 15	1. Training of teachers and aids. 2. Coaching Teachers in the initial application of new teaching methods and modules.
Feb 15-March 1	1. Intensive coaching. 2. Formalization of training for specific module.
March 1-May 30	1. Assisting teachers to implement all six modules. 2. Documenting teaching and debriefing sessions via video-audio tape, notes, journals, classroom observations, and by collecting the written pieces produced by students.
May 30-July 31	1. Analysis of documentation and initial configuration of data into a cohesive first draft. 2. Discussion of findings with teachers, principals and parents and NIE officers.
Aug 1-Oct 30	1. Writing of final report and its implications for policy and practice. 2. Sharing findings with other researchers.

There are fundamentally seven steps involved in the execution of our plans:

(1) Training of teachers

(2) Coaching teachers in the initial stages of writing implementation

(3) Re-training and/or assisting teachers to fully implement all six modules

(4) Documenting via journals, audio/video-tape, classroom observation notes, etc. selected instructional sessions

(5) Collecting written pieces

(6) Analyzing all gathered information and the produced written pieces, and

(7) Evaluating the entire execution of the new instructional activities.

Steps one, two, and three are taking place at this moment. Step three, however, will continue for the next ten to twelve weeks until all twelve teachers implement six modules each. The order of implementation is clear from the timetable presented above. What needs to be clarified is the distribution of responsibilities and the specifics of how the implementation of a single module is structured. The main responsibility for the conceptualization of the modules has been shared by the two co-principal investigators, Drs. Moll and Trueba, the field coordinator, Dr. E. Diaz, and the school coordinator, Rosa Diaz. Ms. Diaz, however, has been the key person in the organization of these modules and the planning of activities. She has, with the support of Dr. Moll and the entire C.E.R. staff, designed and executed each training session, a series of interviews with, and questionnaires of, teachers. Her widely recognized expertise in the training of teachers for writing instruction has attracted more teachers than we can use in our study. The instruction, training and coaching of teachers has been done, and will continue to be done, in team by Dr. Luis Moll, Dr. Esteban Diaz and Ms. Rosa Diaz.

The documentation of the actual implementation of modules will be jointly done by teachers and the above team, plus Dr. Trueba. The analysis and writing of findings will be the primary responsibility of the co-principal investigators, assisted by Dr. and Ms. Diaz.

To give the reader an idea of the actual process of implementation of a single module, let us describe the structuring of the activities involved.

Anatomy of a Single Module Implementation

We assume that prior to the implementation of a specific module, the teachers have:

(1) Received inservice with ethnographic information about the community and training in observing their own classes,

(2) Received training on pre-writing skills and learned to use students' writing responses for generating feedback and editing.

(3) Identified the most interesting and functionally relevant topics which will be the foci of the modules.

There are training sessions and debriefing sessions. The team of trainers convene the teachers for a training session and create a participation structure that allows them to develop peer interaction of a cooperative nature. The trainer in charge, Ms. Diaz, for instance, would then model for them and describe in detail the expected outcomes in a session. During this discussion, she would propose the organization of groups, the role of the teacher and aids, the expected responses of students, the management strategies to cope with potential problems, the use of rewards, and the basic principles behind recommended strategies. Teachers and trainers exchange suggestions and plan together.

The teachers write in detail, through a series of training sessions, the implementation strategies for the module in question. They then determine the week in which the module will be implemented and execute the module. During the week of module implementation, they have access to the trainers to solve problems or report unexpected developments or simply to consult on details on the module itself or its documentation. After the module has been taught in class, there is a debriefing session in which teachers report on the outcomes of their experience. Here is where new strategies are planned and processes are clarified. The debriefing sessions are carried on in the same atmosphere of peer cooperative exchanges as the training sessions, under the low-key direction of the trainers. There is a debriefing session after each module is implemented. The trainers collect documentation at the debriefing session and give immediate feedback to teachers individually.

Evaluation

The evaluation will focus on the process and the outcomes of the implementation of modules. As stated before, it aims at assessing the

effectiveness of the writing activity to produce better writing instructors, better methods to conduct writing instruction, and measurably increment the writing skills of students.

The evaluation of the process is essentially a series of monitoring mechanisms that insure the timely and complete execution of pre-planned activities: These mechanisms should be enforced by the relevant persons in charge of supervising the activities. The co-principal investigators, Drs. Moll and Trueba, are responsible for enforcing the monitoring mechanisms. The monitoring mechanisms consist of regular staff meetings (weekly) in which all research staff report on their fulfillment of responsibilities related to pre-planned activities. If there is a variation in time or nature of the activity, there has to be a justification, discussed and accepted by the co-principal investigators. Monitoring weekly activities and readjusting working strategies is part of the management responsibilities of the co-principal investigators.

The outcome evaluation is essential in order to judge the value of the entire research project. Ultimately, all ethnographic information or the curricular changes guided by such information must serve the purpose of improving the writing instruction. Improvement is measured by the following criteria:

(1) An increased meaningful participation of students in writing activities.

(2) An increased production of written pieces.

(3) The production of qualitatively better written pieces (to be defined below in the context of holistic evaluation).

(4) Evidence of the acquisition of additional skills to analyze and/or generate written pieces.

(5) Evidence of increased commitment to invest time and effort in writing.

The criteria for improvement will be applied at the end of modules implementation by analyzing the documentation per group and per student. Criteria (1), (2) and (5) can be readily obtained through quantitative or simple observational approaches. The remaining criteria, (3) and (4) require some discussion.

Criterion (4) will be used via holistic evaluation of outcomes after the completion of the first and last writing modules. Our approach to holistic evaluation in order to determine qualitative differences in written products as well as gains per student and/or an entire group in the acquisition of skills to analyze and generate written pieces is also structured in a way that is consistent with the theoretical principles guiding our research and our training sessions. (See Table 2, next page).

The twelve teachers, guided by the team of trainers, will develop the specific criteria and score system to be used in order to distinguish a superior piece from an average one, and an average from a poor piece. Teachers will be instructed to define in context-specific terms when the content of a piece is superior, or average or poor, vis-a-vis its structural and stylistic features, its addressing of the topic, its communicative power and relevance for the chosen audience.

All written pieces will be read and judged by more than one teacher, and the products of both the first and the last module will be read and scored by all twelve teachers, and these scores will be averaged.

A more specific description of the evaluation of each student's writing performance will fall into the following categories: (1) Pre-activity assessment of student writing skill level and attitudes, (2) Periodic assessment of student writing skill level and attitudes, and (3) Post-activity assessment of student writing skill level and attitudes.

(1) Pre-activity assessment of student writing skill level and attitude, to include:
   - (a) Survey of literacy/writing values and attitudes will be administered by teachers
   - (b) Collection and analysis of student writing samples using district criteria for assessing writing skills, length of paragraph, word frequency and error analysis, and the holistic evaluation approaches
   - (c) Collection and analysis of results of student writing competency tests (administered 2/82)
   - (d) Teacher views of student writing skill levels. (These have already been collected on the teacher rating of student skills as "poor" or "moderate".

TABLE 2. EVALUATION STRATEGIES

TYPE	FOCUS OF EVALUATION	EVALUATION VIA ANALYSIS OF
PROCESS	Monitoring mechanisms that insure appropriate distribution and fulfillment of responsibilities (see text)	Weekly meetings, on-going supervision by co-principal investigators, presentation of reports to University administrators and NIE officers
OUTCOME	1. Student Participation in writing activities	Cumulative index scales including student investment of hours per week, complexity of tasks, patterns of interaction; initiative and response patterns
	2. Quantity of written pieces produced	Number of written pieces, forms, outlines, and other pieces per week or month, and rate of increase
	3. Quality of written pieces produced	See holistic evaluation process described above
	4. Formal skills to analyze and generate effective writing	Comparison of last pieces with competency examination, for results per child and group (See above discussion)
	5. Motivation to communicate effectively by writing	Observations, interviews and questionnaires will focus on attitudes towards writing.

(2) Periodic assessment of student skill level and attitude during activities:
   (a) Administration of student survey as above
   (b) Analysis of student writings generated by project activities
   (c) Analysis of student awareness of community-related issues
   (d) Videotaping for future analysis and de-briefing sessions

(3) Post-activity assessment
   (a) Assessment of student attitudes at end of project period
   (b) Comparison of pre- and post-performance on competency test administered by teacher
   (c) Assessment as per holistic and other techniques (above)
   (d) Examination of content of all student writing samples
   (e) Assessment of outcome of writing activity as impacted by community issues

V. CONTRIBUTIONS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

The most difficult task of our contract is undoubtedly the last one:

TASK 4: To describe the instructional activities and to discuss in detail how the ethnographic information derived from the study was used in the development of those activities. We have fulfilled part of this task as we described in detail module by module, implementation procedures, training of teachers, and the outstanding performance of junior high students exposed to the "new" instructional activities. The reason why it is difficult to comply with the second part of this task, i.e., with the discussion in detail of "how ethnographic information was used" in the development of the instructional activities, is that the task implied the existence of a relatively simple process going from ethnographic data to new curriculum. The design and implementation processes, as it was described, were not the result of a simple use or transfer of ethnographic data to the "new" instruction. Ethnographic inquiry, nevertheless, had a definite and profound impact in the organization of the successful new writing instructional activities. In order to clarify these statements, and consequently the nature and extent of the contribution that ethnographic research had in the implementation of writing curriculum, it is important to distinguish the different stages of the new writing interventions by researchers and teachers.

In a general way, it is important to recognize that ethnographic research has a definite effect on those who use it well, because it demands the use of a methodology that confronts the researcher with the sociocultural reality of those whose behavior is under study. The use of ethnographic inquiry, as a method of gathering data, can be adapted to different conceptual frames.

This was the reason we stated in the original proposal, in the progress reports, and at the very beginning of this document the theoretical frame and assumptions with which we engaged in ethnographic research.

Once we clarified the fact that we did not use ethnographic research to gather data ready-made, or tailored to fit "new" writing activities, new lessons, or new topics, it is our duty to explain how we used the ethnographic methods. We used an ethnographic approach to understand the sociocultural context of literacy for ethnolinguistic minority students, and the possible ways to render writing instruction more meaningful, engaging, rewarding and effective for these students.

Ethnographic inquiry into the social reality of the junior high school ethnolinguistic minority student means the use of observational techniques, participant observation, interviews and other types of inquiry techniques in the homes, community, schools, churches, working places, parks and streets of the students under study. Ethnographic research has the purpose of giving the researcher a better understanding of the place of schooling, reading, writing and, in a word, achieving academically for these students and their families. More specifically, by focusing on literacy events, their forms, functions and relationships to academic activities, the ethnographer is expected to obtain an inside view, an <u>emic</u> perspective, of these students' behavior in school. Another important focus of ethnographic inquiries is an understanding of culturally appropriate and effective working patterns for ethnic students (as compared with other students). One of the crucial factors determining effective working patterns and the relative satisfaction of the reward system for academic work done, is the role of parents. We spent a great deal of time interviewing parents in an attempt to understand their view of schooling, literacy, writing, and, in general, their role as parents

of minority junior high school students. By focusing our inquiry in these areas we felt we gained insight into the very process of literacy acquisition. But we also realized that it took a great deal more than the gathering of ethnographic information to make sense of the life style of ethnic youngsters, and more than casual observations to understand the problems in learning how to write. It was a painful journey walking step by step with parents, teachers and students; piecing together large amounts of data often seemingly unrelated.

As our realization that an effective writing curriculum had to start by recognizing the social reality of students, we also became aware that teachers could not be instantly trained only by passing to them information we gained or by teaching techniques. By the same token, we also realized that the teachers themselves, the instructors of writing we were about to train, could not teach writing to their students simply by sharing knowledge gained from the experts. This realization had important implications. We were forced to train teachers as "ethnographers" in their own classrooms in order for them to gain insights similar to the ones we had achieved. We helped expedite the process of discovery and exposed the teachers to parents, and other ethnographers. We also alternated their ethnographic inquiries with the experimental instructional design (writing modules) in order for the teachers to understand and analyze with our help the responses of their own students in class. What in fact occurred was the development of an intensive teacher training in which teachers played a key role in shaping their own teaching of writing assisted by ethnographers in the interpretation of student responses. Thus, the answer to our question, how did ethnography help, can be answered by the following statements. Ethnographic inquiry:

1. Allowed researchers to understand the social and cultural systems of the ethnolinguistic community.

2. Helped researchers understand the perceptions of ethnolinguistic minority parents and students regarding school, academic achievement, and specifically, reading and writing.
3. Was used by researchers to train teachers and help them gain insights into their students' behavior, values, capabilities and potential.
4. Was used by teachers to re-structure the writing curriculum and the participation structures during class resulting in a more active involvement of students in those activities.
5. Was instrumental in making teachers shift the locus of control for the organization of writing teams, for the selection of writing topics, and for the identification of appropriate assessment of writing improvement.
6. Was instrumental in permitting researchers to understand the role of parents in their children's acquisition of writing skills.
7. Was highly beneficial in understanding the crises, conflicts, acculturation trends, and overall position of ethnic parents, vis-a-vis school demands.
8. Was definitely indispensable to the researchers in the articulation and evaluation of findings and outcomes of this project, both in the more tangible ones (e.g. outstanding written pieces produced by students for the last two modules) as well as in the least tangible (the profound changes in teacher attitudes) often inferred from casual comments made in encounters with teachers, or written in their journals.

From the above eight contributions of ethnographic inquiry, 2., 3., 4. and 5. deal with the process of writing, that is, the students' struggle to develop autonomously a suitable language production system. Because we were dealing with bilingual students, it is important to point out the additional contributions brought in by ethnographic methods.

Any efforts to acquire literacy involve the use of multiple skills, social, linguistic, cultural, cognitive and so on. These skills are used to conceptualize the audience, the potential message (its purpose and form), the writer's role and the organization of message components vis-a-vis expected outcomes, role perceptions, etc. etc. What is unique for the student acquiring writing skills in a second language is precisely every thing other than the similarities of processes. A native Spanish speaking student learning to write in English has to make special adjustments in at least three fundamental aspects of the process of autonomous language production: (1) The identification of the audience, (2) the internalization of the writer's role, and (3) the articulation of the communicative message vis-a-vis writer's and audience's roles, social norms of interaction, expected outcomes, and cognitive/cultural congruency.

The identification of the audience for whom the message is tailored requires a good knowledge of the classes of audiences, the linguistic, social and cultural means to contextualize the message for this audience, the linguistic repertoire and the names of appropriate communicative behavior of such audiences. Approximations and configurations often show that students are not sure of the appropriate ways of speaking to the adult world (even within their community) about issues that transcend community domains: parenting, drugs, violence, cheating, and other moral issues. Even if the issue at hand seems to be relevant to both Chicano and non Chicano audiences,

you must recognize the different cultural norms ruling the tone, the issues, the purpose and outcomes of the written piece if it was addressed to a non Chicano audience. Pre-writing activities become essentially an intensive course in "know your audience and the issues" before you clarify your role and the topic. A student may in fact have full control of the topic (gangs, growing up in a Chicano community, etc.) but may not know much about what to tell an English speaking adult about it. A rapid increase in audience fictionalization seems to come from direct peer and teacher coaching, and to produce a drastic development in written language production. The second type of problem confronted by the secondary school ethnolinguistic minority student is in the internalization of his/her role as a writer, i.e., the fictionalization of the author's role. This problem is much more profound than a simple dilemma of whether to use Spanish or English in writing. For a relatively isolated Chicano Junior High student, the question of "Who am I?" to specifically these English speaking adults, is a serious one. We are dealing with mutual stereotyping, traumatic experiences in face-to-face and through text interaction. "Who am I?" "Well, I'm Raza, a Chicano, and you are a GABACHO." The issues beyond simple group identity of author/audience written interaction go precisely to the essence of the problem in communication: the implied assumptions about what "you think I think; what I know you know, etc. etc." How do you go about selecting appropriate lexical items in a second language for the speakers of that language if you don't really know how they perceive your role as a Chicano writer. Furthermore, if you are dealing with issues that qualify the relationships of the writer with the audience (i.e., educational or economic inequality, social injustice, etc.), it becomes more difficult to select a consistent role as author. The third and most serious problem, although intimately related to problems of role perception and the possible

lack of cross-cultural validity of author/audience ficitonalization, is one that consists of a difficulty in articulating the integral components of a written piece into a cohesive whole. The syntactic and other linguistic skills required are only part of the cultural familiarity with appropriate discourse patterns needed for the effective manipulation of a language production system. At the macro level, the overall structure of a written piece consists of multiple interrelated pieces that are fitting the jigsaw puzzle; each piece has a place, a function, and makes a partial contribution to the overall intended message vis-a-vis the implied relationship between writer and audience. The local choices are appropriate only in the context of the overall piece. In order to manage the composing process the writer must face constantly the overall picture.

Prior to the experimental interaction we designed via the six modules, we knew that students were poor writers, and that they wrote typically on assigned topics as short term unavoidable tasks. When writing was conceptualized as an attractive and long term task, holistic view and overall configuration of the interrelated components in a written piece became more clear. It was precisely here that the intervention of the instructors was more helpful. The comments below will clarify this statement.

The traditional role of writing instructors assumed that the transfer from face-to-face oral communication to communication through text (reading and/or writing) was a simple switch of symbolic means of expression; i.e. from sounds to letters or written characters. If children knew how to speak, it was assumed, they should know how to convert speech into writing. Gradually, writing instruction became more sophisticated and recognized the differences between communication through text and face to face interaction. The latter permitted interactors to offer each other a cumulation of cues,

checking on chains of understanding, corroborating with paralinguistic and kinesic cues the meanings of messages (linguistic, social and other meanings). As we move towards more sophisticated analyses of writing, we realize that we are dealing with cognitive and linguistic processes that required additional skills. Furthermore, as we examine the acquisition of writing skills in English by speakers of other languages, we find that there is a substantial amount of cultural and social knowledge (above and beyond the required linguistic proficiency) in order to conceptualize appropriately a written piece.

The implications of our basic findings regarding the need for a profound preliminary acculturation concomitant or prior to literacy acquisition in the second language, are confirmed by our observations of the socialization processes of Hispanic parents. They too must learn how to deal with text about "school things" and how, behind the "school things" there is a vast and unknown world of complex subsystems.

The teacher who is in charge of writing is privileged over other teachers. He/she alone has the opportunity to facilitate and increase dramatically the students' literacy skills in their most fundamental problematic aspects: (1) the identification of the audience: school, surrounding Anglo-American society, subsystems representatives, etc., (2) the author's role, the Chicano secondary school student, with a growing bilingualism, biculturalism and biliteracy, i.e., a person who is richer by means of his/her cultural experience and who can communicate with culturally diverse audiences, and (3) the articulation of the written piece which could be enhanced by a greater cognitive flexibility and the linguistic repertoire of first and second languages.

Teachers' role in facilitating the development of writing skills in Hispanic and other linguistic minority students is profoundly linked to the

ethnographic inquiry method. It was indeed through a series of intensive in-service training and observations that teachers became co-researchers, and ultimately they came to understand the problems of ethnic students. Their abundant testimony, summarized in Part IV, emphasizes two basic facts: (1) drastic improvement in writing instruction is possible, and (2) such improvement requires a deeper understanding of the writing process and an adjustment of classroom participant structures.

Improvement in six short months cannot be the result of the development of entirely new linguistic, cognitive and academic skills. It is more likely the creation of a suitable classroom environment permitting students to interact with peers and teachers in a different way, and learn more rapidly how to identify a topic, an audience, one's own role in writing, and the organization of a written piece. They seemed to learn faster by increasing their purposive communication in smaller peer groups, and by experimenting a great deal under the watchful eye of the teacher. The nature of the teacher's role changed drastically as the students small groups devoted themselves to exploring together the writing of a piece and executing the task step by step. Not that the teacher's role was less important; it was selectively used for moments when her/his intervention was needed.

In sum, there is no easy way to argue about the usefulness of a methodological instrument so intricately imbedded in the conceptual scheme framing an entire research design. In spite of this difficulty, we can see the undeniable impact this NIE project has made in the South Bay.

To conclude this part we must allude to several sets of outstanding implications from the findings so far analyzed. One set of implications deals with the need to rectify current conceptions of ethnic student capabilities for development of literacy skills. The second deals with teacher training, i.e., with the notion that teacher's behavior and attitudes can

be modified by simply sharing knowledge with them; and the third, deals with the researcher; that is, how the researchers and teachers together can produce desired changes in school curriculum if they work in team and discover together the underlying social reality of students' responses.

The ethnolinguistic minority students who started with very low writing scores, and over a period of three or four months, increased these skills dramatically, did not change in that short period of time their basic cognitive structures and/or their intellectual capability. The potential was there always. What triggered the change in academic performance was a definite change in the organizational structure of classroom participation, the rewards system, the role of the teachers, the role of the student, and the overall investment of effort in culturally appropriate social/academic work units. Most of these changes were engineered by the efforts of researchers, teachers, parents and students. But students had the most powerful influence. Teachers, parents and students themselves were happily surprised to see the results.

Another important discovery for all involved in the project was the amount of effort and personal investment required to re-train a handful of intelligent, motivated and well prepared young teachers. The nature of the training was not the exchange of techniques primarily. It was indeed the overall adaptation of the instruction of writing to a student population that was eager to share the responsibilities of re-shaping the curriculum, and, more importantly, that knew more than the teachers the content of what they wanted to write. Teachers' journals reveal a touching story, step by step, of the painful realizations that previous efforts, notions and strategies had not been adequate.

A third implication from our findings is the need to redefine the relationship between researcher and teachers (co-researchers and collaborators).

As researchers we know we need the help of the practitioners to get an entree into the school, classroom, and the homes of students. But we often forget that the very analysis of the data we gather requires the insights, experience and expertise of the teacher. But the teacher cannot be of help to us unless he/she is trained; and training takes time, effort and dedication. Furthermore, the teacher alone often cannot create curricular changes in spite of his/her high level of technical competence. The researcher's contribution involves the exposure to ideas and inquiry methods that force teachers to re-think and re-evaluate teaching processes, and students' responses. Together, researchers and teachers can accomplish a great deal more in the improvement of instruction.